



**Jewish Mysticism**

**Kalman Bland, Ph.D.**



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## **Kalman P. Bland, Ph.D.**

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**Kalman P. Bland was born in Chicago, IL in 1942. He received a Bachelor's Degree in Philosophy from Columbia University and a Bachelor's Degree from the Jewish Theological Seminary of America in New York City in 1964. He was awarded a Master of Hebrew Letters Degree from the Jewish Theological Seminary in 1967, and the following year was ordained a Rabbi. Continuing his concentration in the History of Jewish Philosophy and Mysticism, Dr. Bland attended Brandeis University where he earned a Doctoral Degree in Medieval Jewish-Islamic Philosophy in 1971.**

**His experiences include teaching courses in Jewish Theology at the Jewish Theological Seminary, and a course in Medieval Jewish Philosophy at the Reconstructionist Rabbinical College in Philadelphia. He has taught for two years at Indiana University, as well as The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. Since 1977, he has been a faculty member at Duke University where he served as Chairman of the Department of Religion for six years. Currently, he is the Director of Duke's Center for Judaic Studies. He also regularly teaches in the Masters of Arts Program in Liberal Studies. In 1986, he was honored with a Distinguished Undergraduate Teaching Award.**

**His publications include a number of studies and edited texts in medieval and renaissance Jewish philosophy, mysticism and biblical commentary. His topics range from medieval theories of the intellect and immortality to Maimonides' notion of mosaic prophecy. His recent scholarly interests have turned in the direction of medieval Jewish ideas of art and beauty and to the modern myth of Jewish antagonism toward the visual arts. Currently, he is writing a book, tentatively titled, "Sensing Judaism: Medieval Jewish Culture and Aesthetics." He is reported to be a rank amateur musician, playing the viola in his spare time.**

## COURSE OBJECTIVES

These lectures begin by offering an historians answers to two rather straightforward questions: What is Jewish about Jewish Mysticism (Kabbalah)? What is mystical about Jewish Mysticism? The lectures end with an historians attempt to understand our contemporary fascination with such arcane subjects. Along the way, the major trends in Late Antique, medieval, early modern, and modern Jewish mysticisms are introduced. Their characteristic beliefs and meditational techniques are described. The audience may reasonably expect to come away from these lectures having learned something useful about the academic study of religion, the complexity of Judaism's creative impulses, and the astonishing resources of human imagination as it struggles to de-habituate the everyday in order to discover infinities in grains of sand. Honoring the liberal injunction to let nothing human be alien to us, these lectures are designed to demystify the Kabbalah. They do not seek to judge whether the Kabbalah is morally good or bad, healthy-minded or pathological, philosophically true or empirically false, but to discover what made the Kabbalah possible or attractive to its adherents and implausible or repellent to its opponents. Being an optimist, the lecturer assumes that, just as we are not obliged to become triangles in order to grasp the Pythagorean Theorem, we need not be Jewish Kabbalists in order to fathom Jewish Mysticism.

A mere handful of lectures cannot do justice to the two-thousand years of Jewish history during which a plethora of mystical traditions evolved. They cannot chart the many striking parallels and the equally striking dissimilarities between the Kabbalah, Christian mysticism, Sufism, Hinduism, and Buddhism. But they can make visible the otherwise hidden processes by which medieval Jewish mystics--like their counterparts, the medieval Jewish philosophers and theologians--transformed the heritage of biblical and rabbinic Judaism. With ingenious legerdemain, they aligned it with ancient mythic consciousness and newfangled metaphysical doctrines that stressed the conflict between outer appearances and inner realities. The lectures can suggest something of the competition between the philosophic and mystical traditions and explain why mysticism succeeded where philosophy failed. The lectures can also catch glimpses of Jewish history through the lens of the mystics, just as they can identify some of the mystical factors shaping Jewish communal life and ritual practice. Perhaps most importantly of all, the lectures can provide members of the audience with sufficient historical background, technical terminology, and clarification of fundamental concepts to allow them to confront critically the primary sources of Jewish Mysticism as they become more readily available every day. Being an optimist, the lecturer hopes so.

## Lecture One: Historical Framework for Jewish Mysticism

Introducing the course, this lecture raises two questions: What is Jewish about Jewish Mysticism? and, What is mystical about Jewish Mysticism? It answers these questions by contrasting traditional claims to antiquity with modern academic assumptions about historical change. It then correlates Jewish Mysticism with Jewish history, and argues that the mystical tradition is characterized by special doctrines and meditation techniques that alter ordinary states of consciousness.

### I. Historical Framework for Jewish Mysticism

#### A. What is Jewish about Jewish Mysticism (Kabbalah)?

1. The Tradition's Answer: It's all one and the same timeless core
  - a. The Traditional Answer in Modern Garb: Martin Buber
2. The Historian's Answer: Zoos, Museums, Versions, Contingencies, and Development
  - a. The Four Stages of Jewish History
    1. Ancient Near East/Biblical (The Temple, Prophets)
    2. Graeco-Roman/Rabbinic-Talmudic (The Synagogue, Sages)
    3. Medieval: Precarious Existence, Maintaining Inward Balance
    4. Modern: Emancipation

#### B. What is mystical about Jewish Mysticism?

1. East vs. West and other Misleading Cultural Stereotypes
2. Praxis: Cross-cultural meditation techniques for altering states of consciousness
  - a. Affinities with modern psychology (Freud and Jung)
3. Doctrines: Overlap and Standard Deviations with "Garden Variety" Judaisms
  - a. Rabbinic Fidelity; Philosophic Enlightenment, Mystical Reciprocities
  - b. Transmigration of Souls and the *Book of Job*

## Essential Reading

Gershom Scholem, *Major Trends in Jewish Mysticism* , Lecture One  
Martin Buber, *On Judaism* , pp. 11-107  
Steven Katz, "Language, Epistemology, and Mysticism," in *Mysticism and Philosophical Analysis* , pp. 22-75  
Solomon Grayzel, *A History of the Jews* , entire

## Recommended Reading

Peter L. Berger, ed., *The Other Side of God*  
Moshe Idel, *Kabbalah: New Perspectives* , 1-34  
Robert E. Ornstein, *The Psychology of Consciousness* , entire  
Hillel Ben-Sasson, *A History of the Jewish People*  
S. W. Baron, *A Social and Religious History of the Jews*

## Essay Topics

1. Read Yosef Hayim Yerushalmi's book, *Zakhor: Jewish History and Jewish Memory*, and using Yerushalmi's analysis, explain why the "Tradition's answer" to the question of Jewish Mysticism might not satisfy an academic historian.
2. According to Scholem, why were the biblical prophets not mystics? What does this suggest about the inadequacy of all essential, non-historically nuanced definitions of religion?

## Lecture Two: Early Rabbinic Judaism and Mystical Ecstasy

Regulated prayer and biblical study (midrash) dominate the intellectual and spiritual landscape of pre-modern, traditional Judaism in all of its varieties: normally mystical, non-mystical, anti-mystical, and mystically mystical. This lecture analyzes several representative examples of prayer and midrash selected from the classical rabbinic sources. It then highlights both the overlapping complementary and the divergence between normal, text-centered, rabbinic Judaism and ecstatic, heavenly-oriented, mystically-rabbinic, apocalyptic, Chariot mysticism.

- I. Early Rabbinic Judaism and Mystical Ecstasy
  - A. Synagogue Liturgy: Words count
    1. Evening Prayers
    2. Max Kadushin's "Normal Mysticism"
  - B. The Scripture of Midrash: Beautiful Kings, Moses-as-Woman, and Allegorical Breasts
  - C. Ma'aseh Merkabah Celestial Fire, Heavenly Ascent, Angels, and Numinous Hymns
  - D. Two Technologies for experiencing the Divine Fire

## Essential Reading

- Gershom Scholem, *Major Trends in Jewish Mysticism*, Lecture Two  
Joseph Dan, *Gershom Scholem and the Mystical Dimension of Jewish History*,  
38-76  
Michael Fishbane, ed., *The Midrashic Imagination*, pp. 1-95  
Abraham Milgram, *Jewish Worship*, pp. 39-120, 199-289

## Recommended Reading

- Jacob Neusner, *Invitation to Midrash*  
Geoffrey Hartman and S. Budick, eds., *Midrash and Literature*, pp. 3-175  
Max Kadushin, *The Rabbinic Mind*  
E. E. Urbach, *The Sages*  
Daniel Boyarin, *Carnal Israel*

## Essay Topics

1. Read Chapter One ("Odysseus's Scar") in Erich Auerbach's book *Mimesis*, and discuss the extent to which classical rabbinic midrash seems to align the Bible with Auerbach's description of Greek literature.
2. Read Hans Jones' book *The Gnostic Religion*, and test his theories against the diverse evidence of Merkabah literature and midrashic activity.

## Lecture Three: Triumph of Spirituality in German Pietism

In addition to the entire corpus of classical rabbinic Judaism (Palestinian and Babylonian), medieval Jews inherited a set of philosophic perspectives and spiritualist tendencies which transformed their intellectual landscape. This lecture traces the triumph of interiority, ascetic dualism, and Platonic disregard of outward appearances in Jewish Pietistic circles living in the Rhine Valley of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. Drawing its inspiration from the gravity-defying architecture of Gothic structures, this lecture unpacks the following enigmatic analogy, God is to the universe what the soul is to the human body.

- I. Triumph of Spirituality in German Pietism
  - A. Inner vs. Outer in texts: The Nut as metaphor--A Correspondence Course
  - B. Inner vs. Outer in persons: Souls, Angels, Divine Fire, and Gradations
  - C. Inner vs. Outer in divinity: Panentheism Reworks Ma'aseh Merkabah
    1. The Solutions to Anthropomorphism: Glorious New Notions of Divine Unity
    2. *Gematria*, Counting Words and Other Insightful Literary Games
    3. The Hebrew Alphabet and Reality

## Essential Reading

- G. Scholem, *Major Trends*, Lecture Three  
J. Dan, Gershom Scholem and the *Mystical Dimensions*, chapters 3-4  
Ivan Marcus, "Judaism in Northern...Europe to 1500," in *Judaism*, R. Seltzer, ed., 175-182  
Joseph Dan, *Jewish Mysticism and Jewish Ethics*, chpts. 1, 3

## Recommended Reading

- Ivan Marcus, *Piety and Society*, entire  
Kenneth Stow, *Alienated Minority*, entire  
Joshua Trachtenberg, *Jewish Magic and Superstition*, entire

## Essay Topics

1. Read Michel Foucault's discussion of "resemblance" and "episteme" in *The Order Of Things* (pp. 17-42), and discuss the extent to which Foucault might be understood to have captured the spirit of German Pietist epistemology (=theory of knowledge).
2. What strikes you as particularly modern in the German Pietistic "intra-psychic" theory of prophetic revelation?

## Lecture Four: Yoga, Language and Abraham Abulafia

What the German Pietists did with their techniques for seeing to the physical universe and classical texts of rabbinic Judaism, Abraham Abulafia did to the structures of ordinary consciousness. They discovered what they considered to be the deepest structures of Being. This lecture investigates Abulafia's deconstructive, Yoga-like techniques for seeing and thereby introduces one of the two major trends in medieval Jewish Mysticism, Prophetic-Ecstatic Kabbalah.

- I. Yoga, Language and Abraham Abulafia
  - A. Extroverted vs. Introverted Mysticism (Stace)
  - B. The Maimonidean Theory of Prophecy: Sensation; Imagination; Intellect
  - C. The Path to Mystical Union: *The Ladder of Ascent*
    1. Disciplining the Monkey of Consciousness with Cryptography and Word-Play
    2. Union with the Divine by way of Divine Names
    3. Breathing, Making the Body into Vowels, and Dying to this World

## Essential Reading

W. T. Stace, *Mysticism and Philosophy*  
G. Scholem, *Major Trends*, Lecture 4  
Moshe Idel, *The Mystical Experience in Abraham Abulafia*  
Moshe Idel, *Kabbalah*, chpts. 4-5

## Recommended Reading

Moshe Idel, *Language, Torah, and Hermeneutics in Abraham Abulafia*  
Moshe Idel, *Studies in Ecstatic Kabbalah*  
Mircea Eliade, *Yoga: Immortality and Freedom*

## Essay Topics

1. Spell out the argument between those who affirm and deny *unio mystica* in Judaism. Does Abulafia settle the argument once and for all? Please explain.
2. It has been said that “mysticism is the art and science of finding the divine in the most unexpected of places.” Do Abulafian meditation techniques confirm or disconfirm this saying?

## Lecture Five: Theosophy: The Psychodynamics of God

The triumph of inwardness in medieval Jewish Mysticism shows a third face: In addition to German Pietism and Abulafian Prophecy, there was Theosophic-Theurgic Kabbalah. It emerged dramatically in late twelfth-century Provence and continued to unfold throughout the thirteenth century, culminating in the magnum opus of Kabbalah, the Zohar. This lecture introduces the concept of theosophy by examining the doctrine of metempsychosis (transmigration of the soul) as it was expressed in the Book of Dazzlement (Bahir) and the doctrine of creation/theogony in Moses ben Nahmans thirteenth-century Commentary on the Bible.

- I. Theosophy: The Psychodynamics of God
  - A. *Sefer Bahir*: East Mixes with West To Make a Soul, And Other Mystifying Oddities
    1. Symbolic Reproductive Biology
    2. The Symbolic Shape of the Hebrew Letter 'Nun'
  - B. Gnostic Mythology in early Kabbalah: The One God and the Ten *Sephirot*
    1. Divine Attributes According to the Philosophers
    2. Freud Lends a Helping Hand
  - C. Symbols, or Much A-Dieu About “Nothing”
    1. Moses ben Nahman: Kabbalah is Traditional, Not Speculative
    2. Moses ben Nahman: *Commentary*, Creation, and Elliptical Theogony
  - D. The Bible As Ordinary Language About Extraordinary Matters

## Essential Reading

Joseph Dan, *Gershom Scholem and the Mystical Dimensions* , chpts. 5-7  
Joseph Dan, *The Early Kabbalah*  
Moshe Idel, *Kabbalah* , chpt. 6

## Recommended Reading

G. Scholem, *Origins of the Kaballah* , pp. 49-475

## Essay Topics

1. In comparing theosophic Kabbalah to German Pietism, one might enigmatically say that “theosophic Kabbalah is to German Pietism what geometry is to calculus.” Whatever might one mean by saying so?
2. Maimonides was partial to negative divine attributes, the *Book of Dazzlement* was not. What does this difference indicate about the question of God’s knowability AND about the difference between a philosophic and a mythological approach to religious life?

## Lecture Six: The Zohar and Symbolism

By treating the physical universe, the sacred texts and practices of Judaism, and the human soul as autobiographical disclosures of God’s liveliness, the Zohar makes explicit what might otherwise have eluded the interested or devoted observer. This lecture continues to develop the themes introduced in the Fifth Lecture by using the terms and principles of Freudian psychoanalysis as a heuristic device for understanding the mystical consciousness of universal inter-relatedness. This lecture seeks to explain what it might mean to say as above, so below or to claim that reality is an interlocked set of microcosms mirroring one another and the macrocosm.

### I. The *Zohar* and Symbolism

(Not What, but Who is the Bible? The Sea? The Sabbath? The Soul? The Same One.)

A. Abbot and Costello Lend Baseball’s Helping Hand

B. What the Garden of Nuts, a Human Body, and the Bible All Have in Common

C. The Mystic Bible as a “Maiden” in Hiding

1. The Bible as Artifact

2. The Bible as Symbol of the Divine

D. Layers within Layers of the Interlocking Universe



## Essential Reading

- G. Scholem, *Major Trends*, Lecture 6  
J. Dan, *Gershom Scholem and the Mystical Dimensions*, chpts. 8-9  
G. Scholem, *On the Kabbalah and its Symbolism*, chpt. 3  
M. Idel, *Kabbalah*, chpt. 6 (again)  
Arthur Green, "The Zohar: Jewish Mysticism in Medieval Spain," in *An Introduction to the Medieval Mystics of Europe*, ed. by Paul Szarmach, pp. 97-134  
Daniel Matt, *The Zohar* (entire)  
Frank Talmage, "Apples of Gold: The Inner Meaning of Sacred Texts in Medieval Judaism," in *Jewish Spirituality I*, ed. by Arthur Green, pp. 313-355

## Recommended Reading

- G. Scholem, *Major Trends*, Lecture 5  
I. Tishby, *The Wisdom of the Zohar* (3 vols.)  
Yehuda Liebes, *Studies in Jewish Myth and Jewish Messianism*  
Elliot R. Wolfson, *Through a Speculum That Shines: Visions and Imagination in Jewish Imagination*

## Essay Topics

1. Review the readings from Buber listed for LECTURE ONE, and try your hand at using what you have learned from the *Zohar* to confirm or disconfirm what Buber wrote regarding myth in Judaism.
2. What might it mean to say that, according to the *Zohar*, "God, the universe, and the soul do not live separate lives, each on its own plane."

## Lecture Seven: Divine Consequences of Human Behavior

Unlike the medieval philosophic tradition which was content with understanding reality, Theosophic-Theurgic mysticism was devoted to preserving the welfare of reality and its Creator. A close reading of the Zohars inventively chivalrous insights into the biblical Song of Songs reveals how unapologetically audacious the mystics were in eroticizing the cosmos and in staking their claims to sacramental power. The lecture also shows that the mystics were well aware of what they were up against: benevolent and demonic evil.

- I. Divine Consequences of Human Behavior
  - A. Divine Self-Sufficiency According to the Philosophers, Theurgy Among the Mystics
  - B. Ritual as "Divine Need" According to the Kabbalists: Sabbath Meals
  - C. As Above, So Below; As Below, So Above: Making Love, Making God
    1. The Feminine Divine Beloved-Lover is the Miniature Letter 'Yud'
    2. The Masculine Divine Beloved-Lover Goes Courting with Gifts
    3. The Feminine Divine Beloved Lover Responds, Becoming the Big Letter 'Heh'
    4. Divine Courtship Depends on Human Deeds
  - D. The Kabbalists Struggle Against Evil: Divine, Cosmic, Human
    1. The Parable of the Courtesan, Serpents Protecting the Treasure
    2. Preserving Free Will, Saving the Divine Courtship
    3. Rabbi Moses Cordovero, Repentance, and Darkening the Lights

## Essential Reading

- G. Scholem, *On the Kabbalah and its Symbolism* , chpts. 2, 5  
M. Idel, *Kabbalah* , chpts. 7-8

## Recommended Reading

- I. Tishby, *The Wisdom of the Zohar*  
Elliot K. Ginsburg, *The Sabbath in the Classical Kabbalah*

## Essay Topics

1. Some say that mystical fervor is antagonistic to organized, institutional religious belief and practice. To what extent does the theurgic trend in Kabbalah prove or disprove this saying?
2. It is an emphatically modern and cherished secular belief that “men make history,” that our fate lies within our own hands. To what extent does the theurgic trend in Kabbalah anticipate or contradict this modern, patriarchally tinged belief?

## Lecture Eight: Catastrophe and the Kabbalah: Post-1492

The radical dislocation of the Jews from Spain, their exilic wandering, and their re-settlement called for radical re-adjustments in religious life and thought. This lecture explores what happened to the mystical tradition when history intruded upon the relative calm of contemplative meditation and forced theosophically-transformed messianic fervor to the surface. A still-popular Sabbath-hymn is analyzed and the messianic pathos of Lurianic Kabbalah is introduced.

- I. Catastrophe and the Kabbalah: Post-1492
  - A. Expulsion from Spain, Exilic Wanderings, and a 16th-Century Return to Galilee
  - B. From Contemplation to Messianic Fervor: A Sabbath Hymn Welcomes the Bride(s)
    1. Sabbath as Reality and Symbol
    2. Jerusalem as Reality and Symbol
    3. The People as Reality and Symbol
    4. The Soul as Reality and Symbol
    5. The Messiah as Reality

## Essential Reading

- G. Scholem, *Major Trends*, Lecture Seven  
J. Dan, *Gershom Scholem and the Mystical Dimensions*, chpts. 9-10  
Lawrence Fine, *Safed Spirituality*

## Recommended Reading

- R.J.Z. Werblowsky, *Joseph Karo: Lawyer and Mystic*

## Essay Topics

1. How did the events leading up to and following the Expulsion in 1492 change the course of Jewish mysticism, if it changed it all?
2. What might it mean to say that for the *Zohar* evil is a necessary by-product of creation, but for Lurianic theoreticians evil is the very cause of creation?

## Lecture Nine: Messiahs, Messianism and the Kabbalah

Transposed into an asceticized messianic key by Luria and his disciples, Theosophic-Theurgic Kabbalah turned its attention to the personality of the Messiah himself and to the redemptive conditions of life in the Messianic Age. This lecture introduces the paradoxical Sabbatians of the seventeenth-century and the Hasidic movement of East Europe in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Despite the enormous differences between them, the Sabbatians and the Hasidim were fascinated by the personalities and sacred biographies of their leaders. They were also convinced that the human soul could be saved with the help of theosophical categories.

- I. Messiahs, Messianism and the Kabbalah
  - A. Rabbi Isaac Luria's Ascetic Version of Theosophic-Theurgic Kabbalah
    1. Tzimtzum ("Contraction")
    2. Shevirat ha-Kelim ("Destruction")
    3. Tiqqun ("Rectification")
  - B. Sabbatai Zvi: The Paradoxical, Antinomian Messiah and His Disciples
  - C. The Baal Shem Tov and His Disciples, the Hasidim of East Europe
    1. The Idea of the Zaddiq
    2. A Return to Old Ideas: Mystical Ethics and Psychology
      - a. Neutralizing Messianism
      - b. Uplifting Fallen Spirits

## Essential Reading

- G. Scholem, *Major Trends*, Lectures Eight and Nine  
J. Dan, *G. Scholem and the Mystical Dimensions*, chpts. 11-12  
G. Scholem, *The Messianic Idea in Judaism*, pp. 1-303  
Moshe Idel, *Kabbalah*, chpt. 3  
J. Dan, *Jewish Mysticism and Jewish Ethics*, chpts. 4-5  
J. Dan, *The Teachings of Hasidism*

## Recommended Reading

- Gershom Scholem, *Sabbatai Sevi*  
Arthur Green, *Tormented Master: A Life of Nahman of Bratslav*  
Jiri Langer, *Nine Gates to the Chassidic Mysteries*  
I. B. Singer, *Satan in Goray*

## Essay Topics

1. Read Jacob Katz, *Tradition and Crisis*, chpts. 20-22, and comment on the extent to which your understanding of the Hasidic doctrine of the *Zaddiq* confirms or disconfirms Katz's thesis regarding the "disintegration" of traditional Judaism as reflected in or caused by the Hasidic movement.
2. Read David Biale, *Eros and Judaism*, chpts 4-6, and comment on the extent to which the Hasidic movement displays a monolithic solution to the problems of "sensuality, asceticism....and the displacement of desire."

## Lecture Ten: Jewish Mysticism, Nowadays

This final lecture looks to the dynamics of modern Jewish sociopolitical emancipation to explain why nineteenth-century Jewish intellectuals in Western Europe repudiated the Kabbalah and why their twentieth-century counterparts reclaimed it in the struggle to invent a usable past. Scholarly interest in the mystical origins of modern science, developments in modern non-representational art, feminism, fascination with Oriental cultures, enchantment with psychology, and the appeal of neo-Orthodox theologies all contribute to the contemporary revival of interest in the Kabbalah.

- I. Jewish Mysticism, Nowadays: A Potpourri
  - A. The Nineteenth-Century's Embarrassment Becomes the Twentieth's Pride: H. Graetz
    1. History: Doing it Justice
    2. Science: Seeking its Origins
    3. Art: Photography and Abstraction
    4. Reform Judaism Seeks Inspiration
  - B. Jewish Feminism Embraces God as *Shekhinah*, Blessed Be She
  - C. Neo-Hasidism//Contra-Positivism: Abraham Heschel, For Example, and Others
  - D. Kafka, Rabbi Nahman of Bratslav, and Narratives
  - E. The Parable of the Forgetful Prince and the Successful Noble
  - F. Mysticism: The Life of Imagination as an Antidote for Modernity

## Essential Reading

Moshe Idel, *Kabbalah*, chpts. 1, 10

David Ruderman, *Kabbalah, Magic, and Science*

Avram Kampf, *Jewish Experience in the Art of the Twentieth Century*, chpt. 7

Judith Plaskow, *Standing Again at Sinai: Judaism From a Feminist Perspective*

Susannah Heschel, ed., *On Being a Jewish Feminist*

Abraham Joshua Heschel, *God in Search of Man*

Martin Buber, *Tales of the Hasidim*

Arnold Band, *Nahman of Bratslav: The Tales*

Eliezer Schweid, *Judaism and Mysticism According to Gershom Scholem*

## Recommended Reading

A. J. Heschel, *The Earth is the Lord's*

Ben Zion Bokser, trans., *Abraham Isaac Kook*

## Essay Topics

1. Read Zalman Schachter, *Fragments of a Future Age: Hasidism For the Aquarian Age*, and comment on the extent to which Schachter bridges the gap between historical Hasidism and the late twentieth century quest for religious meaning.
2. Read Roger Kamenetz, *The Jew in the Lotus: A Poet's Re-Discovery of Judaism in Buddhist India*, and explain why a Tibetan Buddhist found Kabbalah so intriguing and an Orthodox Rabbi found it so troubling.



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