



Floating Takes Faith: Ancient Wisdom For A Modern World

David J. Wolpe

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We are taught to study, to learn, and to let ourselves grow Jewishly. But where does being the people of the book get us in the real world? David Wolpe's collection of essays responds to this question by exploring how Jewish values, such as scholarship and compassion, together with Jewish practice, enhance an individual's private and public life. How does Shabbat help deflect us from the pressures of the societal rat-race? How can Jewish learning subdue political unrest? Rabbi Wolpe draws the lessons of this collection from a variety of religious and historical sources, finding the importance of Israel in a Robert Frost poem, the nature of God in the words of Beowulf, and parenting lessons in the fatherly techniques of King David. The essays address diverse topics ranging from assimilation to Zionism to Jewish concepts of life and death. Rabbi Wolpe asks the questions, sometimes profound, sometimes light-hearted, that challenge us to consider how we live as Jews, how our Jewish lives are influenced by our secular surroundings, and how we can develop our Jewish souls by continuing to learn from new sources while remaining open to spiritual growth. Some of these questions include: Is it wrong to admire Kant, Voltaire, and Roald Dahl if they were anti-Semitic? How can we reconcile our American family traditions with our Jewish family traditions? In an evolutionary debate, do God and Steven Pinker stand behind opposite podiums? Do we need such a thing as a Jewish home? A Jewish homeland? Why does Walt Whitman think we should stay awake during the rabbi's sermon? What lessons of aging gracefully can we learn from Rabbi Akiba and Grandma Moses? An ideal gift for teachers, Confirmation students, grads, and new families that join the congregation.

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