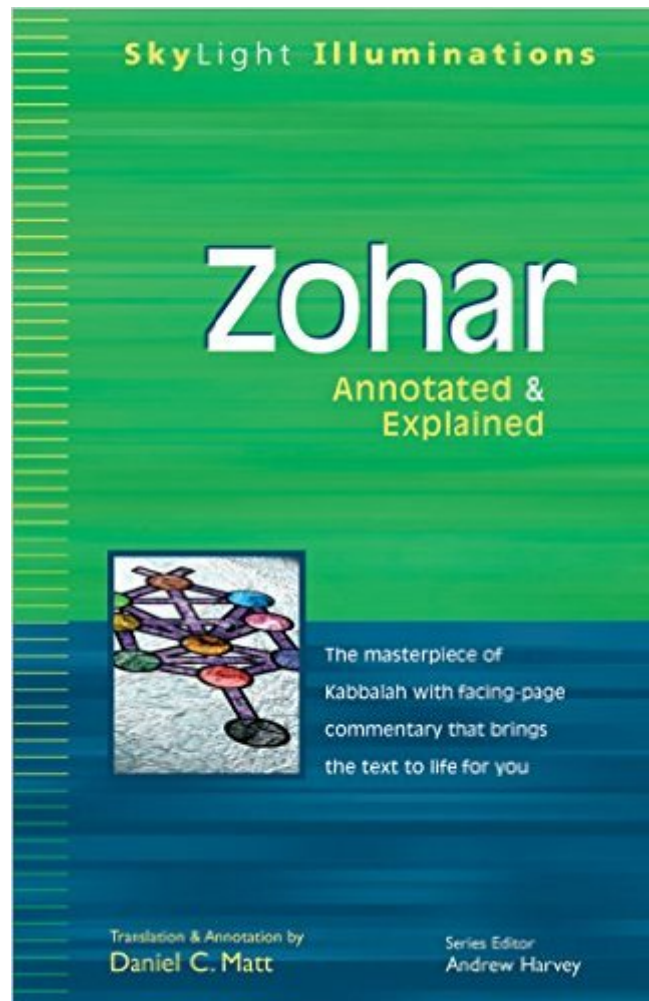


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Zohar: Annotated & Explained (SkyLight Illuminations)



Synopsis

The best-selling author of *The Essential Kabbalah* now offers readers the best introduction to the Zohar. The splendor and enigmatic appeal of the Zohar, the major text of the Jewish mystical tradition, has never intrigued readers of all faiths more than it does today. But how can we truly understand it? Daniel C. Matt brings together in one place the most important teachings from the Zohar, the cornerstone of Kabbalah—described as a mixture of theology, mystical psychology, anthropology, myth, and poetry—alongside facing-page stories, notes, and historical background that illuminate and explain the text. Ideal for the first-time reader with no prior knowledge of Jewish mysticism. Guides readers step-by-step through the texts that make up the Zohar—midrash, mystical fantasy, commentary, and Hebrew scripture—and explains the inner meanings of this sacred text, recognized by kabbalists as the most important work of mystical teaching, in a way that is both spiritually enlightening and intellectually fascinating.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

In the Foreword, series editor Andrew Harvey relates his interesting experience with a wise man in Israel who taught him about the seven wonders of Kabbalah, whilst in the Preface Daniel Matt explains the origin of this book of commentary, drawn from his volume for the Paulist Press. These are the most powerful passages from that book in a revised translation. The introduction deals with the history and contents of the Zohar, a commentary on the 5 books of Moses written in the form of

a mystical novel. The questions of its original author/s, the language, and the Ten Sefirot are also discussed here. I found this interpretation of the first words of Genesis very interesting, as well as the insight that the Zohar urges us to regain cosmic consciousness, a closer connection to the divine. From a linguistic perspective, it is valuable to learn of the neologisms and the use of multiple connotations, oxymorons, puns, parables and puzzles in the text. A chart of the Sefirot is provided. Chapters 1 to 17 consist of selected passages from the Zohar on the right-hand page, with commentary on the left. Chapter titles include The Essence Of Torah, The Creation Of God, The Hidden Light, Adam's Sin, The Binding Of Abraham and Isaac, Jacob's Garment Of Days, the Secret Of Sabbath, The Aroma Of Infinity, God, Israel and Shekhinah, and The Wedding Celebration. The book concludes with notes, a glossary, a bibliography and an index of Zohar Passages. I did not find this book very clear or accessible at first. It was only after I had read

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