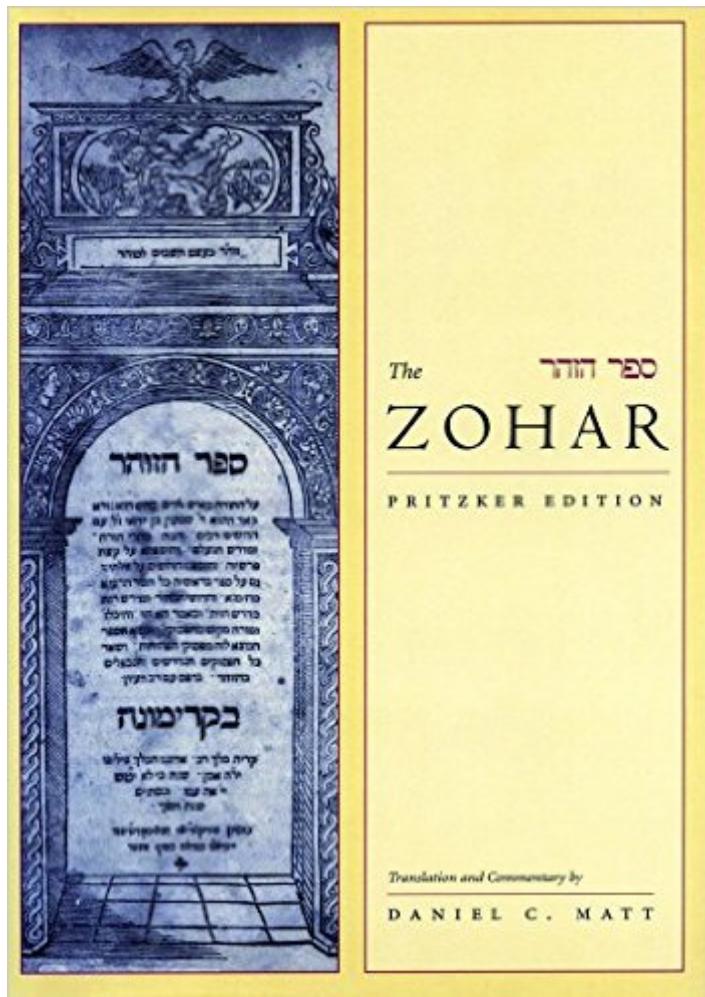


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The Zohar: Pritzker Edition, Vol. 2



Synopsis

Sefer ha-Zohar, "The Book of Radiance," has amazed and overwhelmed readers ever since it emerged mysteriously in medieval Spain toward the end of the thirteenth century. Written in a unique Aramaic, this masterpiece of Kabbalah exceeds the dimensions of a normal book; it is virtually a body of literature, comprising over twenty discrete sections. The bulk of the Zohar consists of a running commentary on the Torah, from Genesis through Deuteronomy. This translation begins and focuses here in what are projected to be ten volumes. Two subsequent volumes will cover other, shorter sections. The Zohar's commentary is composed in the form of a mystical novel. The hero is Rabbi Shim'on son of Yohai, a saintly disciple of Rabbi Akiva who lived in the second century in the land of Israel. In the Zohar, Rabbi Shim'on and his companions wander through the hills of Galilee, discovering and sharing secrets of Torah. On one level, biblical figures such as Abraham and Sarah are the main characters, and the mystical companions interpret their words, actions, and personalities. On a deeper level, the text of the Bible is simply the starting point, a springboard for the imagination. For example, when God commands Abraham, Lekh lekha, Go forth... to the land that I will show you (Genesis 12:1), Rabbi El'azar ignores idiomatic usage and insists on reading the words more literally than they were intended, hyperliterally: Lekh lekha, Go to yourself! Search deep within to discover your true self. At times, the companions themselves become the main characters, and we read about their dramatic mystical sessions with Rabbi Shim'on or their adventures on the road, for example, an encounter with a cantankerous old donkey driver who turns out to be a master of wisdom in disguise. Ultimately, the plot of the Zohar focuses on the ten sefirot, the various stages of God's inner life, aspects of divine personality, both feminine and masculine. By penetrating the literal surface of the Torah, the mystical commentators transform the biblical narrative into a biography of God. The entire Torah is read as one continuous divine name, expressing divine being. Even a seemingly insignificant verse can reveal the inner dynamics of the sefirot; how God feels, responds and acts, how She and He (the divine feminine and masculine) relate intimately with each other and with the world.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

From Parshat Lekh-Lekha to Parshat Va-Yetse, you are in for a treat. The reasonings the insights the dialogue... if you do not come away with a sense of being totally ignorant... you have not read the book! Being involved as I am with the study of the Hebrew text and history of the Torah, finding the commentary footnoted and researched such as these tomes present to the reader, all I can say is, Daniel C. Matt, truly has Someone watching over his shoulder... His ability to parse nuance, the notes are almost more valuable than the text itself! And the fact that the reconstructed Aramaic is provided as a download makes this series, this edition, invaluable! If you want to complete your understanding of what the matter of the Zohar is all about - GET THIS SET - I don't care if the books cost \$100 apiece or more(!) or weigh a ton(!)... if you want to study the Zohar's depths - Get this set(!) I bought this volume (2) in 2004 as a pre-order (as I do all the volumes,) and with each new volume - I wait with anticipation for each, just as much as I did the first, knowing that with each new volume - an adventure in the Torah and the thinking of the Old Sages will be presented to me with freshness, and the proper sense of wonder it is meant to leave you with!

this series, I have read 1 - 4 so far, has been incredible.the wisdom hidden between the lines (which is really only viewable in Hebrew) has been tremendously insightful, the nuances of the words is so so deep, more than most can imagine.it's really easy to see why at one time the catholic church wanted to ban the bible and quran and institute this, though I am glad they didn't. The reason I say that is because true understanding will never come in only one language and in one series of books, but rather a conglomeration of all, but this series is probably the MOST enlightening of all of them.I would recommend this series to anyone interested in the faith.the only complaint I have about the series is that as a homeless and disabled man myself it hurts me to carry one of these on my back, and god knows I couldn't carry 2 or 3 as genesis and exodus are both 3 volumes each.this REALLY

needs put on the kindle, I can't keep buying the hardbacks, my back is growing soft from them, I am physically in pain from it, I wish Daniel C. Matt and Stanford press would show some compassion and put it on the kindle, but I guess they are worried about their "profits" and not their prophets.

This volume of the Zohar is just as awesome as the last one! Great job on the translation, Daniel Matt!!!

Joyful academia, #2 I think that phrase best describes Daniel Matt's translation "with commentary" of the Zohar. PLUS no red string needed to reap the benefits of this incredible series. The author is much like a skilled chef: he understands what ingredients are in the product...in addition to where each ingredient has been grown...and also understands how they interplay with each other, how to mix them and how the final product will taste even before cooking it. Daniel Matt takes us into the garden that is the Zohar and acts as tour guide, storyteller and head chef. A word of caution however: this is a meal of esoteric thought. Some of the flavors you will be exposed to may seem a bit too scary taste or unfathomable. Like any feast of exotic food, you will need to commit yourself to the whole meal to gain perspective and appreciation for each course. The payoff will be a deliciously deep & rational understanding of the Zohar specifically and the Jewish mystical experience as whole. This is an important and valuable addition to everyone's library.

I bought the first 3 volumes at once and now have the pleasure of spending the next 5 years exploring the intricacies of the Zohar. Great detail and the deepest discussion of text I've ever seen. Bravo!

Outstanding translation of the Zohar with great footnotes. A tour-de-force of scholarship. Probably one of the most accurate and certainly one of the most complete translations of the Zohar you can get.

The Matt translation is clear and pristine and I find the commentary brings remarkable clarity. I chose the Matt Zohar Translation related to Matt's obvious simple desire to share this marvelous writing of Jewish antiquity with others who seek greater understanding of Torah. Sharon Robertson

I am still on volume 1 so I am not really qualified to review this volume. However, I will still throw in my 2 cents! Daniel Matt is brilliant.

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