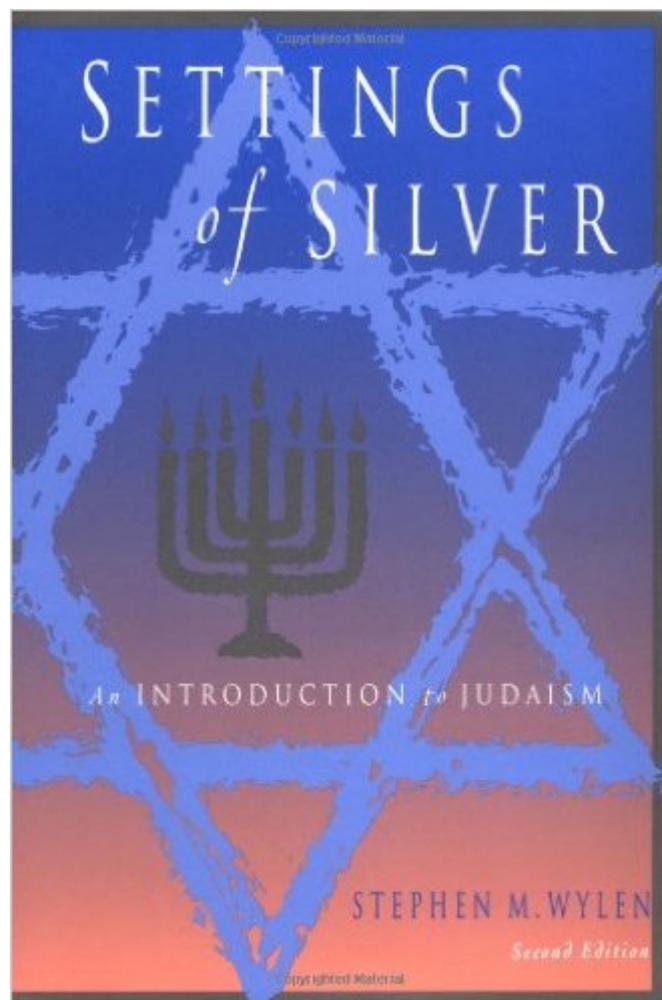


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# Settings Of Silver: An Introduction To Judaism



## **Synopsis**

Originally published in 1989, this comprehensive survey of Judaism has become a popular text in universities, religious colleges and seminaries, and adult education classes. Now, its author, Stephen Wylen, performs a genuine service by updating his critically acclaimed text for the 21st century. *Settings of Silver, Second Edition*, reflects the changes in the political structure of Eastern Europe and other recent events, while retaining its accessibility, easy-to-understand language, and compactness. In four sections, the author covers the history of Judaism. Section One includes basic beliefs, what it means to be a Jew, the role of Torah, and the Jewish view of God. Section Two covers faith, practices and customs, including holydays, marriage and family law and ritual, dietary laws, and beliefs surrounding death and the afterlife. Section Three is a history of Judaism, from its foundations to the early part of the 20th century, with a look to mysticism, literature, philosophy and daily life in the Jewish community. In Section Four the author continues the history of Judaism up to the present day, including the Holocaust, the State of Israel, the effects of modernism on Judaism, and the future of Judaism. Engaging, timely, and appropriate for persons of all religious backgrounds, this enduring work belongs in the library of anyone (Jews included) who wants to understand Judaism and the Jewish people.

## **Book Information**

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## **Customer Reviews**

If you are interested in converting or would like to know more about the jewish way of life, then this is the book to read.Rabbi Wylen explains it all in a very understanding way. I loved it.

If you are looking for a fairly thorough, balanced, and scholarly approach to the introduction of

Judaism, it seems this book should suit your needs. The writing is fairly clear and direct, so it could be used for an introductory course to the Jewish faith, and covers Judaism in more detail than shorter works. The writer tries to avoid introducing biases or preferences for one view of Judaism (Modern, Conservative or Reform) over the other. Historical dimension on the development of Judaism is also included here. On the whole I found it to be a responsible and thorough overview to the Jewish faith, and the concerns of the Jewish people.

A great book for adults who have forgotten a lot since gradeschool, or for those looking to convert. In-depth discussion of a wide range of topics.

Reading this book give so much information, you get closer to judaism as its possible. I was enjoying so much reading this book, it is a great selection if anybody is going to convert to judaism.

This book is an excellent primer for those who are looking to learn more about Judaism, whether for the purpose of gaining general knowledge or wishing to discover whether conversion is a good route for them to take. It is incredibly informative and easy to read without dumbing down things or sounding preachy- in fact, this book makes no attempt to encourage conversion, it just provides information clearly. A refreshing change from many Christian works which encourage conversion first and provide information second, often in false causal chains or assuming unrelated line items to be true. This book is not dogmatic making it great.

'Settings of Silver' contains many beautifully written, lucid descriptions of Jewish beliefs, customs, holy days, and religious practices. It is an invaluable, easy-to-use guide for either a non-Jew who wants to explore one of the world's oldest monotheistic faiths or a potential convert to Judaism. (If you are already a practising Jew, this will be a little too basic for you - try reading one of Blu Greenberg's excellent books instead.) However, the author then makes the fatal mistake of writing a chapter on Israel and Zionism. This is a volatile topic that deserves a full book to itself. Wyler has crammed thousands of years of history into one short chapter that is crawling with bias. At one point he even calls Israel an innocent baby whilst labelling the Gulf Arab states as 'bullies'. Impartial historical analysis or what? He tells no outright lies, but - to the observant Jew at least - giving only half the truth is as bad as telling a full lie. Wyler seems to suggest that Judaism is synonymous with Zionism, which - as any Chasidic Jew will tell you - is not the case. As a history and politics student, I was so outraged by his bias and oversimplifications that 'Settings of Silver' slipped right down in

my estimation. There is no such thing as black and white or right and wrong in politics. Given the number of traumatised (and destitute) Palestinian refugees I have met, modern-day Israel is not the land of milk and honey that Wyler would have you believe. Religious content: exceptional. Political content: dubious to say the least.

Excellent source material and it came like new. This is a very informative book for those looking to expand their basic understandings of the Jewish faith.

Wonderful foundation book about Judaism. Great for people who are converting or those who want to understand the faith and traditions of the Jewish people.

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