



The Star of Return: Judaism after the Holocaust (Bibliographies and Indexes in World Literature)

Dow Marmur

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At the heart of this sustained meditation that touches on aspects of the history, present state, and possible future of Judaism is Rabbi Dow Marmur's conviction that Judaism is in the midst of a paradigm shift. Rabbi Marmur contends that whereas the Holocaust marked the beginning of the tragic end of the old paradigm of exile, so the establishment of the State of Israel points to the beginning of something new. The Jews' return to the land of Israel has great religious significance in that halakhah, the Jewish legal tradition, has been superseded by mitzvah, the Jews' covenantal response to divine call, as the cohesive force in contemporary Jewish life. Accompanying this shift of emphasis from halakhah to mitzvah, Rabbi Marmur finds that the categories of hope, power, and righteousness are beginning to dominate Jewish thought and Jewish life. The Star of Return, a liberal Jewish response to the religious implications of changes in the post-Holocaust era, looks at this profound transformation in terms of the individual Jew's relationship to Israel and establishes that relationship within the context of traditional Judaism.

The volume's three major sections encompass the topics of heresy, transformation, and renewal. Part I primarily discusses issues arising from the interface between institutional aims and individual alienation. The three chapters invite Jews to re-examine their Jewish heritage and to make a greater commitment to Jewish belief and practice. In Part II, an investigation of the transformative process, Rabbi Marmur builds on Franz Rosenzweig's model of the Magen David and reminds readers that the unique biblical covenant between God and Israel was made with individuals. These chapters assert that this fusion of land, people, and faith has been dramatized by the return to the land of Israel and has resulted in a paradigm shift. The final section, Renewal, written from the point of view of a committed Zionist and Reform Jew, offers a dissenting perspective on the central issues of hope, power, righteousness, community, and covenant that at the same time strongly affirms the covenant's message. This eminently thought-provoking work with its lucid articulation of Jewish purpose today, is essential reading for both Jews and non-Jews concerned with the evolution of Jewish thought.

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