



The Jewish Book of Why--The Torah

Alfred J. Kolatch

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The Torah, the first five books of the Bible, is the moral guide of the Jewish people and the centerpiece of its religious life. For centuries, the teachings (Torah means "teaching") contained in this sacred 3,500-year-old document have been read aloud in the synagogue and studied privately by those seeking to extract from it meaningful life lessons.

Maintaining the sanctity of the Torah scroll is of high priority in Jewish tradition, and to achieve that end many laws have been introduced and customs established. In addition, numerous requirements relating to the writing of the Torah scroll and the reading of the scroll in the synagogue have evolved over time.

Following the "why" format he introduced in *The Jewish Book of Why*, in this volume Rabbi Alfred J. Kolatch addresses hundreds of questions about the Torah rites and rituals that are followed today. He also traces the origins of the Torah and explains the different methods of interpretation and analysis that are used in its study.

From why Mount Sinai was chosen as the site of the Revelation, to why a Torah scroll must be written on parchment with a quill, to why non-Jews are permitted to handle a Torah scroll, Rabbi Kolatch explores a wide range of fascinating issues simply, concisely, and straightforwardly. As in his other best-selling books, he makes the information both crystal clear for the layman and reflective of the attitudes and practices of Jews of all denominations.

This title was previously issued as *This Is the Torah*.

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