

RAPHAEL, SIMCHA PAULL (2019). JEWISH VIEWS OF THE AFTERLIFE (3RD EDITION). LANHAM, MD: ROWMAN & LITTLEFIELD. ISBN 9781538103449. 481 PAGES (INCLUDING INDEX).

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It is rare that *Omega: Journal of Death and Dying* publishes a review of a later edition of book that was first published 25 years ago. However, in this case, there are a number of compelling reasons to do so. First, 25 years ago, *Omega* generally did not do book reviews. Secondly, there are a few significant additions in later revisions that ought to be noted. Finally—and most importantly *Jewish views of the afterlife* is a rare gem of a book that should not go unnoticed by scholars in thanatology and/or religious studies.

When asked about Jewish views of the afterlife, most casual observers would emphasize that Judaism is focused more on this life than the next. Raphael's work clearly puts this myth to rest. With great detail and painstaking scholarship, Raphael explores the rich and complex development of Jewish perspectives and debates on the afterlife. The book is encyclopedic in its treatment, carefully exploring Jewish perspectives from Biblical Judaism through the period of medieval scholarship through to contemporary times. It is inclusive exploring Orthodox and Reform perspectives as well as the viewpoints of the Kabbalists and Hasidic sects. Each new edition included not only new scholarship but new topics such as reincarnation, ghosts and spirits in Yiddish literature, and implications of the afterlife for Jewish ritual. Yet despite the scholarship, there remains a deep sense of compassion that never fails to explore the implications of this material to assisting others dealing with dying and bereavement.

Put simply, this book is the source.

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