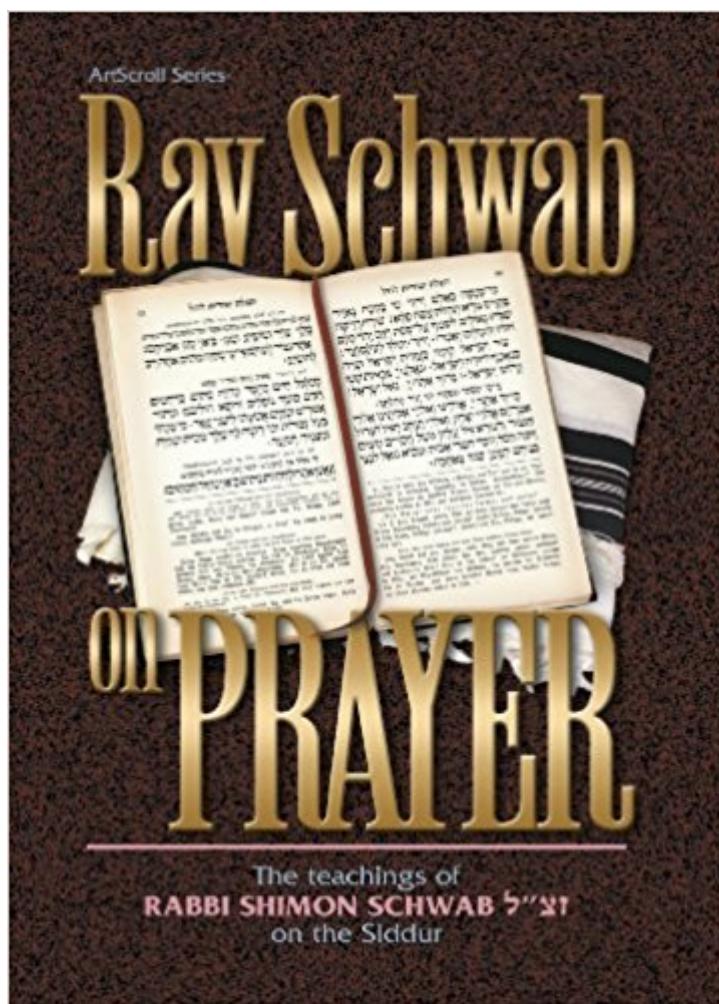


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Rav Schwab On Prayer (ArtScroll Series)



Synopsis

This great Rav's final gift to his beloved people: In the last few years of his long, distinguished, and productive life, Rabbi Shimon Schwab, the famed and beloved spiritual leader of Khal Adath Jeshurun in Washington Heights, NY, taught Siddur to his congregants. He was officially "retired," but his mind and conscience never rested. Always a great thinker and teacher, he turned his attention to the Siddur, and drew his congregants along with him. A lifetime of learning, thought, piety, and perspective were poured into these stimulating and inspiring lectures. Rabbi Schwab was a product of two worlds: the Frankfurt-am-Main of Rabbi Samson Raphael Hirsch and the Lithuanian Yeshivah. He absorbed both, blended both, molded them with his great intellect, profound faith, vibrant heart, and charismatic personality. He was a rabbi in Nazi Germany until it became impossible for him to function. He was called to serve the German kehillah in Baltimore during an era when rabbis in America were expected to accommodate themselves to the times, but he did the opposite. He forced the times to accommodate themselves to the Torah -- and became a heroic figure in the American rabbinate. After a long and successful career in Baltimore, he joined Rabbi Joseph Breuer in the rabbinate of Khal Adath Jeshurun. History has come a full circle, as the scion of Frankfurt became the Rav of Khal Adath Jeshurun in New York, the successor of the famed Frankfurt kehillah. He became the moral voice of American Orthodoxy, eloquently demanding integrity and idealism -- and succeeding because he made the same demands of himself. He always went upward, and drew his listeners after him.

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Customer Reviews

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Fantastic content and very easy to read through.

Being familiar with Rav Schwab's other writings this work, despite being published several years after his passing, closely reflects his style. Much of what he says (they were originally taped lectures) is either based on the plain meaning but phrased in an acutely relevant way, or alternatively highly original (e.g. his system on the structure of the prayers reflecting that of the daily service in the Temple in Jerusalem). Some background knowledge required. A particular strength is his attention to the custom of his own community. While many other communities gradually adopt a generally uniform style, Rav Schwab's community stuck true to its German customs. He explains particular variances from the "standard ArtScroll" prayer book numerous times.

Rabbi Schwab, a renowned Rabbi who survived the Holocaust and emigrated to New York, has posthumously published, with the help of Artscroll, a meticulous explanation of the most frequently

recited Jewish prayers. The detail and liberal use of Hebrew can be intimidating, particularly if you're a "new Jew" like me--a baal t'shuva. For those of you seeking a more elementary text, I highly recommend Steinsaltz's book on prayer, Reuven Hammer's "Entering Jewish Prayer," and Donin's "To Pray As a Jew." But this book belongs on your shelf. It can be skimmed, read closely, or consulted for in-depth analyses. It will be there waiting for you (and, baruch Hashem) for me when the day comes that I'll be able fully to appreciate and apprehend it. I may not understand the book in its entirety, but I know a masterpiece when I see one.

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