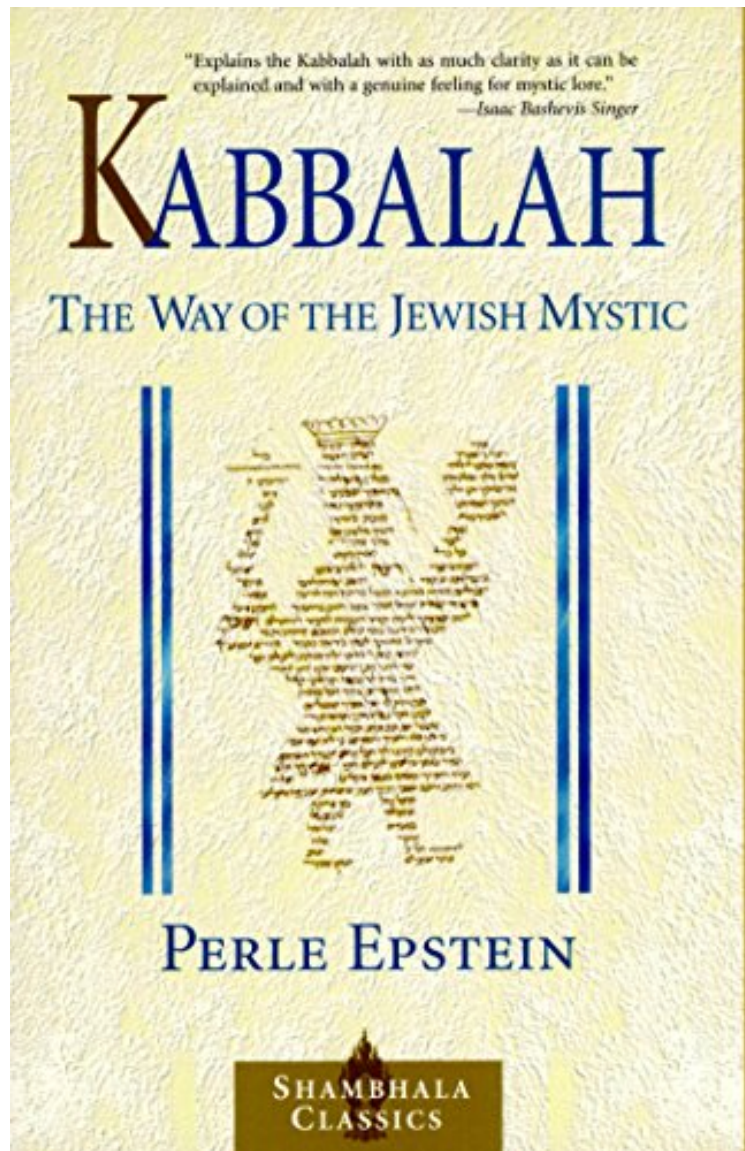


## Kabbalah: The Way of The Jewish Mystic (Shambhala Classics)

Von Perle Epstein

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**Von Perle Epstein : Kabbalah: The Way of The Jewish Mystic (Shambhala Classics)** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Kabbalah: The Way of The Jewish Mystic (Shambhala Classics):

KundenrezensionenHilfreichste Kundenrezensionen1 von 1 Kunden fanden die folgende Rezension hilfreich. A great introduction to Jewish spirituality! Von Rabbi Yonassan Gershom This book was first written back in the '60's and published in the early 70's, when so many Jews were going to Eastern religions in search of the spirituality that (they

thought) was not in Judaism. At that point in time, there was -- hard as it is to believe now -- very little material available about Jewish mysticism for the popular-level English reader. Seekers either had to struggle through the post-Ph.D.-level heaviness of Gershom Scholem's academic style, or learn Hebrew and read the source texts. Either was a daunting task for the casual seeker who just wanted some authentic info about kabbalah and how the Jewish mystics practiced its forms of meditation, etc.. Enter Perle Epstein (now Perle Besserman). She was already doing a series on the various forms of mysticism, and had already covered Buddhism, Zen, etc., so she decided her next project would be on the mysticism of her own Jewish background. (As an interesting aside: Like so many assimilated Jews of that era, Epstein came to mysticism and meditation through yoga and Hinduism first, and was not a religious Jew when she began the "Kabbalah" project. So, she had a two-fold struggle: (1) to find the teachings, and (2) to confront her own issues and stereotypes about the Orthodox Jews she was interviewing. The personal story of these struggles and how she collected the material for "Kabbalah" is told in "Pilgrimage: Adventures of a Wandering Jew" which, as far as I know, is out of print but well worth tracking down a copy.) The influence of her Eastern studies and practical experience with Hindu gurus and Zen masters can be seen in "Kabbalah," such as the way she describes the 16th-century Safed community of Rabbi Isaac Luria as a "Jewish Shangri-la" and a sort of ashram community, -- which, in a sense, it was. This made the teachings very understandable people who were already familiar with the Eastern forms of meditation. In fact, it was the first popular book I know of that clearly identified some of the practices as forms of visualization, use of mantras, etc. In my opinion, these types of cross-cultural comparisons are very helpful to Jews (and others) who want an introduction to how Jewish mysticism has been practiced down through the centuries. The book is not an academic tome, but is written in a clear popular, almost poetic style that I found a delight to read the first time around, and have returned to again and again. For many years during the 70's and 80's, this book was my #2 recommendation to Jewish beginners in kabbalah, as well as non-Jews wanting to know something about our spirituality. (my #1 recommendation was "9 1/2 Mystics" by Herbert Weiner). I am delighted to see that Epstein's book is available again, so I can recommend it on my website.

Kurzbeschreibung This pioneering, popular introduction to Jewish mysticism was the first survey written for a general audience, and it's now available in Shambhala Classics. Epstein presents the methods, schools, and legendary practitioners of Kabbalah, unraveling the web of ancient traditions hidden in such texts as the Sefer Yetzirah and the Zohar. The words of the great Kabbalists appear throughout the book, giving instructions on practices such as contemplation of the Bible's secret teachings, ecstatic prayer, and intensive meditation.

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Synopsis A lively and accessible introduction to the world of Jewish mystic lore \* Presents the methods, schools, and legendary practitioners of Kabbalah \* Traces the history of the Kabbalah through the lives of its illustrious scholars and saints and unravels the web of ancient traditions hidden in such texts as the Sefer Yetzirah, and the Zohar \* Includes commentary by great Kabbalists such as Simeon bar Yohai, Isaac Luria, Abraham Abulafia, and the Baal Shem Tov

This pioneering, popular introduction to Jewish mysticism was the first survey written for a general audience and is now available in Shambhala classics. Epstein presents the essence of Kabbalistic methods, schools, and practitioners while the words of the great Kabbalists appear throughout the text giving instructions on practices such as contemplation of Biblical secret teachings, ecstatic prayer, and intensive meditation.