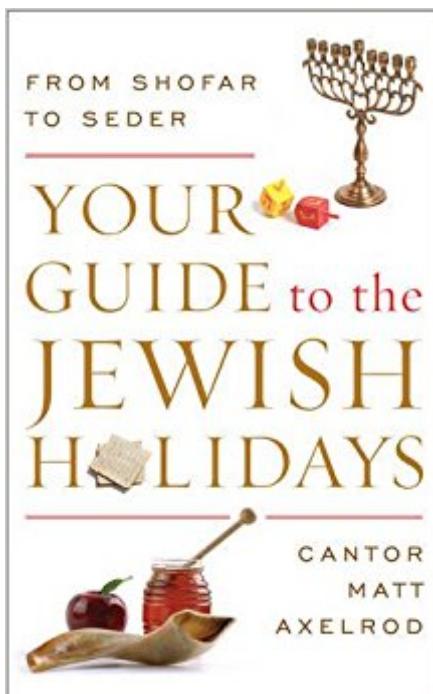


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# Your Guide To The Jewish Holidays: From Shofar To Seder



## Synopsis

Recent years have seen an increased interest in Jewish life, its culture, and its celebrations. There are many new students of Judaism, often potential converts or members of interfaith families who are seeking to learn more about the religion and its rituals. Unfortunately, many of the existing texts that examine the Jewish holidays are written in a dry, unexciting way, making it difficult for the reader to retain much information. For those seeking to learn more about Jewish celebrations, Cantor Matt Axelrod has written *Your Guide to the Jewish Holidays: From Shofar to Seder*. Intended for the reader who has no prior knowledge about the Jewish holidays as well as the reader who knows the basics about the holidays but wants to understand the holidays on a deeper level, Axelrod's book takes a humorous, light-hearted look at the 11 most important Jewish holidays. Instead of simply explaining that Jews are obligated to observe in a certain way because of a biblical text, Axelrod shows where each holiday, along with its rituals, came from in a historical context. He provides a humorous retelling of the biblical passages relating to the holiday, explorations of rituals associated with each holiday, and descriptions of traditional foods. *Your Guide to the Jewish Holidays* also features special sections labeled "In Depth" or "Perfect for Families" that expand upon elements of each holiday in ways that provide greater understanding of traditions or that invite the reader to get the rest of the family involved.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

The book opens with the familiar but still funny line some Jews use to describe their holidays:

“They tried to kill us. We won. Let’s eat.” Happily, this book takes things further and does so in highly readable manner. All the major holidays are covered, as well as some of the lesser ones, including Tishah-b’Av, a day that commemorates the destruction of both the First and Second Temples in Jerusalem. Ironically (or not), it is also the day the Jews were expelled from Spain in 1492. Because the book is written without affectation, those new to the holidays will find it a way to understand both the meaning and the observance of Judaism’s special days. The text is full of interesting facts, from the origin of the Kol Nidre service to the story behind gift giving at Hanukkah and the derivation of Moses’ name. And, appropriately, each holiday gets a section, called “Let’s Eat” that details the foods associated with the day (or in the case of Yom Kippur, how to fast). A good starting point for both Jews and their non-Jewish friends who want to know more. --Ilene Cooper --This text refers to the Hardcover edition.

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There are 'Tips for Parents' and 'In Depth' segments throughout. He describes the holidays also through real-life applications and scenarios such as alternatives to camping in a tent for seven days during Sukkot. The three appendixes—a 'Quick Guide to the Holidays,' a Jewish calendar, and a glossary—offer great value on their own. VERDICT. . . This is an excellent choice for readers new to Jewish holidays and history and anyone wishing to incorporate these meaningful celebrations into their own lives. (Library Journal)

While I think this publication could benefit from some visual aids, it does an excellent job of offering an overview of the Jewish calendar and giving readers a "feel" for the year. The tone is lighthearted yet informative, and I found myself enjoying the book more as it progressed. The author goes into detail without becoming bogged down in them, striking a nice balance. Having grown up in a Jewish neighborhood, I thought I had the holidays pretty well down pat, but there were a few in here of which I'd never heard before. All in all, very well worth the read, and I intend to return to it as a reference work.

This book is fun to read and easy to understand - for Jew and Gentile alike.

Very informative book. Very enjoyable reading!

thanks! great book!

Great thx!

Author forgot to mention that book is full of reform ideas that have nothing to do with real Judaism.

Please keep in mind while many Jewish people have faithfully kept (observed) these "appointed times" they are not Jewish holy days or holidays. They are God's appointed times. Check it out, the Scriptures are clear on this. If you claim to be a believer of Jesus then those "Jewish Holidays" (holy days) are yours as well. We must be thankful that to those Jewish Folk who have kept these holy days. No Christian is free of a responsibility to understand these days as their appointed times with the God of The Holy Bible.

This book while not heavy in scholarship affords a look into the festivals of the Old Testament and

our Hebrew brethren. The author gives a clearer understanding of the more well known feasts such as Passover, but also the lesser known holidays on the Jewish calendar. A Christian would glean knowledge of how these festivals pertain to their faith and may wish to consider celebrating them themselves. I enjoyed the book very much, it was quite riveting!

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