

# The Call of Transcendence: Exploring Abraham Joshua Heschel's Spiritual Journey

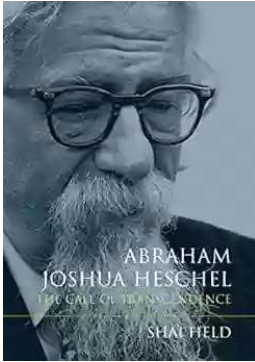
Have you ever felt a profound sense of awe and wonder that cannot be explained by the material world alone? The yearning for something beyond ourselves, something transcendent, is a universal aspect of the human experience. And few individuals have embodied this quest for the divine as magnificently as Abraham Joshua Heschel, a renowned Jewish theologian, philosopher, and religious leader.

Born in 1907 in Warsaw, Poland, Heschel grew up in a highly religious Jewish household. His father, a Hasidic rabbi, exposed him to the rich spiritual traditions of Judaism from a young age. As he embarked on his own spiritual journey, Heschel developed a unique and profound understanding of the call of transcendence, emphasizing the importance of bridging the gap between God and humanity.

Throughout his life, Heschel dedicated himself to studying, teaching, and promoting interfaith dialogue. He firmly believed that religion should not be confined within the walls of one's faith community but should serve as a catalyst for social change and understanding. Heschel's commitment to justice and equality led him to actively participate in the civil rights movement in the United States, standing alongside iconic figures such as Martin Luther King Jr. His activism was deeply inspired by his deep spiritual connection and belief in the divine imperative to pursue justice and righteousness in the world.

**Abraham Joshua Heschel: The Call of Transcendence** by Shai Held (Kindle Edition)

★★★★☆ 4.6 out of 5



Language	: English
File size	: 1111 KB
Text-to-Speech	: Enabled
Screen Reader	: Supported
Enhanced typesetting	: Enabled
Word Wise	: Enabled
Print length	: 352 pages
Lending	: Enabled



One of Heschel's most influential works, "The Sabbath: Its Meaning for Modern Man," delves into the concept of the Sabbath as a day of rest and spiritual rejuvenation. Heschel argues that the Sabbath is not simply a religious ritual but a profound opportunity to reconnect with the divine and experience moments of transcendent bliss. Through his vivid and poetic language, Heschel transports his readers into the realm of the sacred, inviting them to witness the beauty and wonder of the Sabbath.

It is through this lens of transcendence that Heschel invites us to reimagine our relationship with the world around us. In a society driven by instant gratification and material pursuits, Heschel's teachings remind us of the importance of slowing down, reflecting, and finding moments of sanctity in our everyday lives. He challenges us to see the world not as a mere collection of objects but as a tapestry of divine creation, filled with meaning and purpose.

In addition to his theological and philosophical contributions, Heschel's personal life exemplified his deep commitment to transcendence. He approached every moment as an opportunity to encounter the divine, whether it was through prayer, study, or engaging in meaningful conversations. Heschel's presence radiated a sense of spiritual intensity that left a profound impact on those around him.



Portrait of Abraham Joshua Heschel

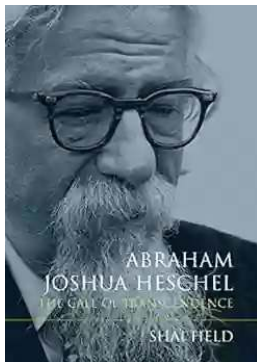
As we delve deeper into Heschel's teachings, we discover that the call of transcendence is not limited to any particular religious tradition. It transcends boundaries, embracing the seeker of truth in every corner of the world. Heschel's writings and teachings serve as an invitation to embark on a spiritual journey, to explore the depths of our own souls, and to connect with the divine presence that permeates all of creation.

So, how do we answer the call of transcendence in our own lives? Heschel offers no easy answers or quick fixes. Instead, he urges us to cultivate an attitude of radical amazement, to be fully present and receptive to the wonders of existence. It is when we open ourselves to the possibility of encountering the divine in the most ordinary of moments that we begin to unravel the mysteries of transcendence.

Let us not overlook the call of transcendence that echoes in our hearts. Now is the time to embark on our own spiritual journey, to seek the divine, and to let the awe-inspiring presence of transcendence transform our lives. In the words of Heschel himself, "We can know the universe only through its manifestations; it's theophanies."

Abraham Joshua Heschel's legacy lives on, inspiring generations to discover the beauty of transcendence and the profound connection between humanity and the divine. His teachings continue to transcend religious, cultural, and temporal boundaries, reminding us to listen to the call of transcendence that resonates within us all.

\*\* : Abraham Joshua Heschel The Call Of Transcendence. \*\*



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“Through Heschel, Held’s work reaches out more broadly to treat us to a profound discussion of the great issues in contemporary Jewish theology” (Arthur Green, Hebrew College Rabbinical School).

Abraham Joshua Heschel (1907–1972) was a prolific scholar, impassioned theologian, and prominent activist who participated in the black civil rights movement and the campaign against the Vietnam War. He has been hailed as a hero, honored as a visionary, and endlessly quoted as a devotional writer. In this sympathetic, yet critical, examination, Shai Held elicits the overarching themes and unity of Heschel’s incisive and insightful thought. Focusing on the idea of transcendence—or the movement from self-centeredness to God-centeredness—Held puts Heschel into dialogue with contemporary Jewish thinkers, Christian theologians, devotional writers, and philosophers of religion.

“Shai Held’s book is a master class in one of the most significant Jewish voices of our time.” —Tablet

“In this lucid and elegant study, one of the keenest minds in Jewish theology in our time probes the vision of one of the most profound spiritual writers of the twentieth century, uncovering a unity that others have missed and shedding light not only on Heschel but also on the characteristically modern habits of mind that impede the knowledge of God. The book is especially valuable for the connections it draws with other philosophers, theologians, and spiritual writers, Jewish and Christian. Enthusiastically recommended!” —Jon D. Levenson, Harvard University

“[A] thoughtful, illuminating new study of Heschel’s thought . . . It is one of the many virtues of Shai Held’s book that it helps us to place Heschel alongside not only Kaplan but Halevi, Horovitz, and Rav Nahman—as well as the Psalmist.” —Jewish Review of Books



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