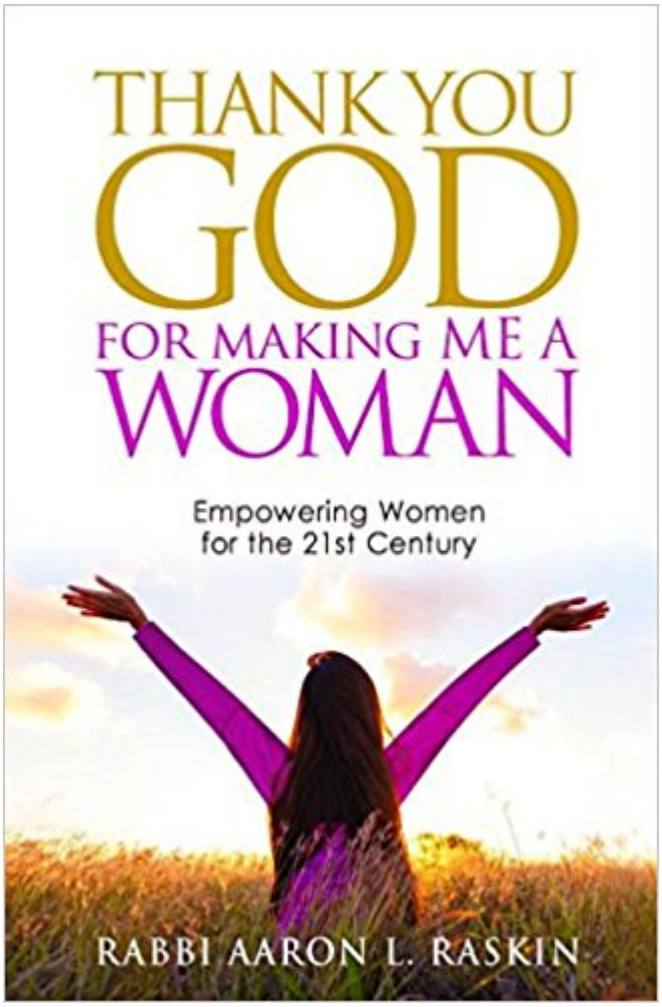
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Thank You GOD For Making Me A Woman: Empowering Women For The 21st Century



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Synopsis

THANK YOU GOD FOR MAKING ME A WOMANÃ¢â ¬Å“The Torah believes in the potential and capabilities of every man, woman or child, Jew and gentile alike, and clearly believes that men and women were created equal, and with their own distinct, respected role in the world. Ã¢â ¬Å“ - Rabbi Aaron L. RaskinWhere would the Jewish people be without the discernment and wisdom of Jewish women - qualities they possess far in excess of men? Time and again, holy text and real-life experience prove this. "The Talmud reveals that it was in the merit of the righteous women that our forefathers were redeemed from the land of Egypt," writes the author. "About this, the Arizal explains that the souls of this generation are a reincarnation of those souls, and therefore, the women of this generation will once again bring about the redemption for all people."Ã Â This book aims to show that it is a mistaken belief that Judaism values the male contribution to its daily liturgy and life more than the female. In a clear and compassionate style, it lays out traditional observance and new scholarship with simple language. Ultimately, the Jewish woman's role as ubiquitous force in daily life becomes clear: her power is subtle, mystical, transformative. Her role isn't marginal, it's essential.Ã Â Mystical teachings tell us that women were granted understanding (bina) in greater measure, and therefore only they can transform a concept of wisdom (chochmah) into action (daat). Hence, we might extrapolate that no holy thing can come about if, in some way, a woman's wisdom is not behind it.Ã Â Discernment is a female quality; and it's time we understood and acknowledged its presence in daily Jewish life.Online Listings Done: Ã Â Other

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Customer Reviews

The spiritual leader of Brooklyn's Congregation B'nai Avraham for over 28 years, Rabbi Aaron L. Raskin has published five books that have been translated into many languages. A dynamic and sought-after public speaker, Raskin's Monday-Night Lecture Series is broadcast regularly on Chabad.org. He lives in Brooklyn Heights with his wife, Shternie, and their children.

Book Review:Would Rosa Parks go to an Orthodox Synagogue?Thank G-d For Making Me A Woman by Rabbi Aaron L. RaskinReviewed by Michael M. BastAmerican Jews have been raised from birth on the iconic and heroic vision of Rosa Parks refusing to sit on the back of the bus, at the risk of imprisonment and physical abuse. Just as an observant Jew would willingly die before committing the sins of murder, idolatry, or adultery, so would an American Jew willingly die before tolerating racial, sexual or national prejudice of any kind. These are core beliefs; unshakable; a matter of conscience and pride.As Letty Cottin Pogrebin and other feminist Jewish writers have pointed out, anything which even superficially sounds like these prejudices gets an instantaneous reaction: Hell, no, we wonÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â„¢t go! Probably thousands of American Jewish girls and women will not set foot in an orthodox synagogue because of the mechitzah ÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â œ the wall of separation between the men and women.And itÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â„¢s not just the mechitzah they hate. They hate the mikveh (whatever that is); and they hate not being counted for a minyan. (Which sounds like the early US Constitution which counted slaves as 3/5th of a person.)The American Jew quickly processes these buzz words as follows: Mechitzah = separate but not equal. Mikveh = natural body functions make us dirty. Minyan = we donÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â„¢t count, weÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â„¢re second class citizens.Rabbi Aaron L. Raskin took on the near-impossible task of challenging these buzz words in his newest book, Thank G-d for Making Me a Woman. In it, he offers convincing proof that the mechitzah is not about pushing Rosa Parks to the back of the bus. Nonetheless, heÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â„¢s going to be blasted in the mainstream media. Blasted! To distinguish blatant sexism from customs with justifiable (or even essential) spiritual significance will take a serious commitment of time. Many readers will be unwilling to make this investment.Rabbi Raskin is a member of the largest Rabbinic family in the world, Chassidic royalty in the Chabad Lubavitch movement. A gifted and entertaining public speaker, he has over 50,000 regular world-wide listeners to his weekly classes on the internet, with over 250,000 unique hits.For those fans, he wrote his previous books, Letters of Light which explained the shapes and personalities of the Hebrew letters; and By Devine Design, which discussed the strange and seemingly random spelling and handwriting ÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã Å“errorsÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã Â• in the Torah scroll.But his latest book is not for his fans. This book, Thank G-d for Making Me a Woman, was written for his

critics.The title of the book is a twist on one of the most quoted and provocative prayers in the Hebrew siddur. Every morning, even before reciting the ShÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â„¢ma, Jewish men recite fourteen blessings thanking G-d for the very basics of existence. Included among these are thanks for knowing right from wrong, and for not being made a slave. The third blessing is apparently sexist: Thank you G-d for not making me a woman. (The women say nothing in this space in some prayer books; in others, they thank G-d ÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã Å“for making me according to his will.ÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã Â•)Rabbi RaskinÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â„¢s new book says, ÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã Å“hold on, itÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â„¢s not what it sounds like!ÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã Â• Most readers will not bother with his introduction, or the section on the womenÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â„¢s special mitzvah of lighting Shabbat candles. Nobody cares what women can do. The reader wants to see what she canÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â„¢t do, so she can slam it against the wall with her pre-existing views confirmed. So go ahead, turn immediately to chapter 6 on the hated mechitzah.This section is about making love. In private. Whaaa? ThatÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â„¢s right: itÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â„¢s about making quiet, private, dedicated, sweet love. ItÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â„¢s about shutting the door, pulling down the drapes, disconnecting the phone and being alone ÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â œ with G-d. Prayer is intimacy with G-d. This being so, Rabbi Raskin argues, nobody should see anybody during prayer. It would be like cheating on your spouse. The mechitzah, and the tallit that the men pull over their heads, are for privacy. In fact, there should not only be a mechitzah between the men and the women, but also between every congregant. This is not sexism. This is holiness.Chapter 7 addresses the question of ÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã Å“countingÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã Â• toward the minyan. The reader might expect the standard (and to many, unfulfilling) answers concerning differing levels of obligation, time-bound laws, or prayer being punishment reserved for men to atone for the sin of the ten male Spies. Rabbi RaskinÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â„¢s unexpected interpretations of the word ÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã Å“countingÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã Â• are food for thought.This is a very important book. I am not aware of another author tackling these difficult issues and coming out ÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã Å“proÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã Â• instead of ÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã Å“con.ÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã Â• Even letting this book be seen on your book shelf will take a bit of courage. But the discussion it is likely to generate may give the necessary airing to some profound concepts which are not deserving of snap judgments.There were a few omissions. Why does the mechitzah in some synagogues separate front and back, instead of side to side? Why must a man give a divorce to a woman instead of the reverse? WhatÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â„¢s the fuss over women rabbis? Hopefully these questions will be answered in the second printing.

I loved how a Rabbi wrote a book that all women must read.He was able to answer questions in Judaism about women, clearly ,precisely,and finally understanding that a women is the most important in Judaism. I can absolutely say "Thank G-D for making me a women".

I did not believe many of the concepts that Aaron Raskin was giving. It felt disingenuous. The reasonings used just didn't hold interest.

At his Shabbos table and at his office, Rabbi Raskin deferentially refers to his wife as a beacon of good deeds, the one who illuminates their family life and whose hard work at home and at her beautiful pre-school inspire everyone who comes into her orbit. "Thank You God for Making Me a Woman" provides readers with chapter and verse directly from Jewish sources and from the Rabbi's own experience, illustrating for us the great respect and honor due to women. Written in a compelling, very readable style, the book flows smoothly from point to point, building the case for the importance of a woman's role in Jewish life, a man's respect for women and an appreciation of true partnership between men and women. Personal anecdotes lend liveliness and credibility to textual references, and keep us wanting to read more. This is a book whose time has come. In language that is current and impactful, Rabbi Raskin has presented it to us at just the right moment!

Dear Rabbi Raskin,I have just received today an early copy of your book entitled"Thank you God for making me a women"."This book is bold. Like a freshly baked challah it is a woven work of scholarship, and like a truly beautiful women inside and out it combines wonderful "aha" moments, with "wondrous" and profound esoteric and mystical insights as well as "entertaining" and "whimsical" notes of "woe"! and "wow"! feelings. The book is poignantly to the point and filled with true torah wisdom, which takes the reader on a virtual journey through the full gamut of Jewish history and literally sheds light on age old issues in a palatable way.Earth waited 5777 years for this work, and now it has indeed arrived. Served for total consumption and personal transformation.I have read page 1- page 79 in one read , as I was unable to put the book down...I will finish the book today, but I did not want you to wait to share my feelings as soon as I did.With much success in all your holy work,Mordechai Z. Hecht, Rabbi

This book is a must read!!! I came from a non-religious household and reading this book has catapulted me into wanting to learn more about Judaism and has inspired me to build a home for my children to understand the value of living by the law of the Torah. Most of all, it has made me really

proud to be a woman and I feel honored by the importance of the role I get to play in my family and community. This book is important for all women to read, and perhaps even more important for the men. It will change your life!

I've just read 'Thank You G-d for Making Me a Woman' in just a few hours, and now preparing to read it over again!I found it to be a captivating read, tying many new ideas together and also giving good clarity on existing knowledge. Reading each paragraph brought about either new information or a new revelation for me. The inclusion of short stories help to understand and interpret each chapter even more in depth. Parts of the appendix I shared with my husband to read, and we plan on talking more about the stories and what I've taken away from the book.Thank you for sharing this empowering and enlightening collection of teachings and ideas. This is a wonderful perspective to learn more about religion in my own life and future.

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