

Sapphire Light

Select Gems of Spiritual Wisdom

To buy *Sapphire Light*: <https://izzunbooks.com/collections/SAPPHIRE-LIGHT>

To buy *Sapphire Mind*: <https://izzunbooks.com/products/SAPPHIRE-MIND-roland-o-brandman>

Both also available on Amazon

All reality is one luminescent-sapphire "Presence" or "Mind" manifesting in different shades of clarity. Each mind and body is a fragment of that universal Sapphire Light. Our psychological-spiritual development is polishing the jewel. It is also a redemptive journey through diverse territories: we can escape from a stifling land of dark confinement, then wander in a desert of pristine-white emptiness, and eventually pass into a broad land teeming with rich diversity, where we can live in sacred freedom.

This book is a kaleidoscopic guide containing profound principles about consciousness and reality, practical wisdom, meditation techniques, picturesque metaphors, stories and more. Through its 54 essays and anthologised quotations from the Jewish tradition, *Sapphire Light* is a transformative foundation for bringing deeper spiritual practice, meaning and wellbeing into your life.

For readers who wish to explore in more depth the rich texts quoted in this book, Roland Brandman's more detailed anthology, *Sapphire Mind: Liberation in Jewish Meditation*, remains available for purchase from Izzun Books at: izzunbooks.com.

SAPPHIRE LIGHT TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION	1
<i>GENESIS</i>	
1. B'REISHIT – Mind creates our reality	15
2. NOACH – The arising of evaluation and suffering	28
3. LECH L'CHA – Advance through the challenges	45
4. VAYEIRA – Keeping our doors open wherever the wind blows	48
5. CHAYYEI SARAH – Some perspectives on good and evil	50
6. TOL'DOT – Faithfulness and perseverance	59
7. VAYYEITZEI – The Infinite is always here for those who look the right way	61
8. VAYYISHLACH – Neutral acceptance	68

9.	VAYYEISHEV – How experiencing the mystical light can transform us	72
10.	MIKKEITZ – Our world is a dream we interpret	82
11.	VAYYIGASH – Forming greatness from our flaws and difficulties	89
12.	VAY'CHI – Silence & noise and being & achieving	92

EXODUS

13.	SH'MOT – Perforating the veils of ego and escaping the ego's pursuit of busy-ness	107
14.	VA'EIRA – Use the breath to compose the mind	114
15.	BO – Spirituality in eating and drinking	117
16.	B'SHALLACH – Subdue the mind's horses in the wisdom sea and reach the far shore	124
17.	YITRO – Mountains as a metaphor for the world of dualistic separation	128
18.	MISHPATIM – Mind and reality symbolised by sapphire and land	133
19.	T'RUMAH – Channelling our authentic grain to form a beautiful structure	162
20.	T'TZAVVEH – Making yourself into a light-filled temple by surrendering ego	167
21.	KI TISSA – Open compassion and the inter-connectedness of all beings	172
22.	VAYYAKHEIL – Do every action in the moment with attention and elevation	182
23.	P'KUDEI – Your true original self is clouded by your passing thoughts	195

LEVITICUS

24.	VAYYIKRA – Moving away from external commotion to internal reflection	203
25.	TZAV – Effort in cultivating spiritual qualities and deeds slowly bears fruit	207
26.	SH'MINI – Action free of our personal goals and preferences	210
27.	TAZRIA – Is human nature good or bad?	217
28.	M'TZORA – Careful speech	225
29.	ACHAREI MOT – Forgiving ourselves	228
30.	K'DOSHIM – Retreat from worldly pleasures to master desire	232
31.	EMOR – Assiduously polishing up our character traits until our light shines through	245
32.	B'HAR – Internal freedom	248
33.	B'CHUKOTAI – Enjoying a unified activity in the present moment	252

NUMBERS

34.	BAMIDBAR – Spiritual practice elevates us to the Source from which we then shine	257
-----	--	-----

35.	NASO – Beware of intoxicants	260
36.	B’HA’ALOT’CHA – Forgiving others	263
37.	SH’LACH L’CHA – Accentuate the positive	268
38.	KORACH – Distinctions and constructs have truth and value	272
39.	CHUKKAT – Opening wide the doors of acceptance and peace	283
40.	BALAK – Positive speech	289
41.	PINCHAS – Elevating the body	291
42.	MATTOT – Wiping away the mental illusion and darkness foreign to our true selves	295
43.	MASEI – Passing beyond the mind’s dualistic constructs	300

DEUTERONOMY

44.	D’VARIM – An established path over a formidable mountain brings you to the sky	307
45.	VA’ETCHANAN – Constantly remembering and embodying oneness	309
46.	EIKEV – One divine voice underlies all thoughts and worlds	313
47.	RE’EH – Suffering depends on how we think	321
48.	SHOF’TIM – Being wholehearted and present in action	325
49.	KI TEITZEI – Compassion for all living beings	328
50.	KI TAVO – Silence is precious	331
51.	NITZAVIM – Spiritual realisation is within you to experience and embody	335
52.	VAYYEILECH – Transcending suffering and re-channelling suffering	365
53.	HA’AZINU – Clearing the egoic mud clogging the sparkling wellspring	369
54.	V’ZOT HA-B’RACHAH – Your blessing is now	373

FROM THE PROLOGUE OF SAPPHIRE MIND (without footnotes)

Before liberation – ordinary mind

The mind is our prism. We see reality, construct reality, through our minds, through its fluctuating thoughts, views and feelings. We believe them and put our trust in them. They define us. They confine us. [Says Nachman of Breslov:] “The mind...It is like a wild horse, turning and swerving from one path to another.” We are chained to its course; ensnared in its rambling and self-reinforcing web of egoic desires, aversions and constructs; swept along in a mental current of ever-shifting waves and tides, rising and falling with them.

First steps towards liberation – glimpsing sapphire as without mind

Notwithstanding the persistence and resistance of that drive, meditators, by a range of practices, have been able to harness, direct, quieten, halt or cut themselves loose. Particularly in the stillness of mental silence, they have then glimpsed over the prison walls, over the waves to see the shore beyond. In moments as fleeting as lightning, a wider and elevated consciousness is experienced as thoughts stop or stand aside. This is a release and redemption outside the bonds and bounds of mind, body and world, outside time and space. Tranquil. Translucent. Transcendent. Pure. Holy. Boundless. One.

The contemplative neophyte often believes this newly experienced Pure Consciousness, outside the mind-body-world prison, to be the most treasured experience of his life: a sapphire gemstone, like the sky for purity. Sapphire treasure, as he might see it, is found in *no* mind; it is in the annihilation of thoughts and feelings that liberation from imprisonment into boundless freedom arises. Sapphire treasure, for him, is not to be found in the mind, the body or the other things of this world, but is separate, in a realm devoid of such things. Indeed mind, body and world might seem to him inferior to that realm, obstacles to reaching that realm, a coarse dross to be discarded.

This is the true view for him at that stage on the spiritual path where he has had to break free from confinement...However, it is still a limited, confined view. For what faculty is it that could make and hold such a view of two separate worlds, one superior to the other? It was surely not made by that Pure Consciousness which is without thoughts, does not speak, and so could not declare that one thing is something and another thing is something else. No, it is the mind itself which has stated the separate-worlds view. It is the mind that says a consciousness of normal thoughts is different from a consciousness of blissful oneness.

Liberation seen – sapphire beyond mind

With more time spent dedicated to the spiritual path, mind is not simply silenced, but seen, seen through, seen beyond. When thoughts arise in awareness, the meditator can contemplate them, sit beside them, rather than being only them and limited by them. No judgement of mind – for example, that thoughts are one (inferior) thing and the sapphire treasure of pure consciousness is another (superior) thing – need be added to the bare experience of watching. As with any other potential distraction to meditation, maybe a person talking or an itch, the watcher need not add to or encourage thoughts, nor need he suppress them. He may just sit present with them, encompassing them under a simple and open gaze – “Gaze into your mind at these scattered distractions!” [Piaseczner Rebbe] – and the thoughts that arise will pass freely across the mental field of vision and then dissolve, either to make way for more thoughts or for more silence. That practice is key. It is like gazing at the sky: “I watched – and behold: there was no person and every bird in the sky had flown away. [Jeremiah 4.25]” There is now radiant light in a cloudless mental sky: “The awakened will shine like the radiance of the sky. [Daniel 12.3]” Now, “May I be silent, lest my defiance taint the quiet blue of the sky! [Rachel Bluwstein]”