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## **How Can the Teachings of Maimonides and Spinoza Reshape Our Understanding of God, Truth, Revelation and Reason?**

Moses Maimonides (1138–1204) is Jewish history’s greatest exponent of a rational, philosophically sound Judaism. He strove to reconcile the teachings of the Bible and rabbinic tradition with the principles of Aristotelian philosophy, arguing that religion and philosophy ultimately must arrive at the same truth. Baruch Spinoza (1632–77) is Jewish history’s most illustrious “heretic.” He believed that truth could be attained through reason alone, and that philosophy and religion were separate domains that could not be reconciled. His critique of the Bible and its teachings caused an intellectual and spiritual upheaval whose effects are still felt today.

In **MAIMONIDES, SPINOZA AND US: Toward an Intellectually Vibrant Judaism** (Jewish Lights / February 2010 / Hardcover / \$24.99) theologian Rabbi Marc D. Angel, PhD explores how these two great thinkers came to formulate what we know as Jewish theology and philosophy today, incorporating the influences of Torah, rabbinic sages, Greek philosophy, and pre-modern and modern science. He breaks down their philosophical arguments with relevant historical detail, making them more accessible to a wide audience. His analysis touches on many provocative but vital questions of enduring importance, including:

- Can the revealed truth of religion and the empirical truth of science be reconciled?
- What is the nature of God? Can it be described?
- Is Torah really the perfect, errorless word of God?
- Does God play an active role in human affairs?
- What is the ultimate source of Truth?
- How important is it to observe ritual?
- Can Judaism be fully embraced by non-Jews?

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**Rabbi Marc D. Angel, PhD**, is founder and director of the Institute for Jewish Ideas and Ideals ([www.jewishideas.org](http://www.jewishideas.org)). Rabbi emeritus of Congregation Shearith Israel of New York City, he is author and editor of twenty-six books, including *Foundations of Sephardic Spirituality: The Inner Life of Jews of the Ottoman Empire* (Jewish Lights).

**MAIMONIDES, SPINOZA AND US**  
**Toward an Intellectually Vibrant Judaism**

*By Rabbi Marc D. Angel, PhD*

Jewish Lights (Woodstock, VT); [www.jewishlights.com](http://www.jewishlights.com); 800-962-4544  
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**Praise for**

**MAIMONIDES, SPINOZA AND US**  
**Toward an Intellectually Vibrant Judaism**

By Rabbi Marc D. Angel, PhD

“Clever and insightful.... Sketches a Maimonidean approach to Judaism essential for Jews who are attracted to Torah but unwilling to turn off their brains. Based upon studious research and profound knowledge [yet] presented with a light hand and in an engaging manner.”

—**Professor Menachem Kellner**, Department of Jewish History and Thought,  
University of Haifa; author, *Must a Jew Believe Anything?*

“An intriguing and extended conversation between three voices: Maimonides, Spinoza, and Rabbi Marc Angel, an increasingly influential voice for openness and inclusivity in the contemporary Jewish community .... A fascinating attempt to bridge the centuries!”

—**Rabbi Neil Gillman, PhD**, emeritus professor of Jewish thought, The Jewish  
Theological Seminary; author, *Doing Jewish Theology: God, Torah and Israel in Modern  
Judaism*

“Makes the thought of Maimonides and Spinoza on vital topics of contemporary religious import accessible to readers with characteristic clarity and erudition. [Anyone] interested in achieving mature and intellectually honest religious faith will be entranced and educated by the dialogue and concerns this uncharacteristically open Orthodox rabbi presents in this engaging book.”

—**Rabbi David Ellenson, PhD**, president, Hebrew Union College–Jewish Institute  
of Religion

“Boldly attempts to revive the Maimonidean tradition, arguing for a spiritually vibrant yet intellectually sophisticated Judaism.”

—**Dr. Marc B. Shapiro**, Weinberg Chair of Judaic Studies, University of Scranton

“Accessible ... engages the thought of Maimonides and Spinoza on issues of both perennial Jewish and general importance. I applaud Rabbi Angel’s lovely book.”

—**Heidi M. Ravven, PhD**, professor of religious studies, Hamilton College; author,  
*Themes in Spinoza’s Philosophy*

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**MAIMONIDES, SPINOZA AND US: Toward an Intellectually Vibrant Judaism** (6" x 9", 224 pp, Hardcover, ISBN 978-1-58023-411-5, \$24.99) is available from Barnes & Noble, Borders, Books-a-Million, Indigo/Chapters, amazon.com, barnesandnoble.com, and many other booksellers, or directly from Jewish Lights Publishing, P.O. Box 237, Woodstock, VT 05091; Tel: (802) 457-4000; Fax: (802) 457-4004; www.jewishlights.com. For credit card orders, call (800) 962-4544. Add \$3.95 shipping and handling for the first book, \$2.50 for each additional book.