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Rabbi Rami Guide to Forgiveness: Roadside Assistance for the Spiritual Traveler

Rami Shapiro
Spirituality & Health Books (November 2011)
Softcover $11.95 (120pp)
978-0-9837270-0-2

Forgiveness is much more than saying one is sorry. Rabbi Rami explains that forgiveness is an attitude that should instruct our entire lives. He questions the prevailing religious and societal understandings of forgiveness by redefining the term and exploring the motivations for seeking and receiving it, the practice of granting it, and the results for both the petitioner and grantor.

He aims to help readers need forgiveness less by explaining how to live more thoughtfully and to help them be able to receive and grant forgiveness more easily by living more humbly. His unique take on forgiveness is based on a worldview that some religious adherents might find challenging; however, even if one does not agree with all of his foundational thoughts, all should find instructive and encouraging his advice on behaving more thoughtfully, with more compassion and more humility. The eleven practical exercises included help move readers from consideration to application.

As in some other of his “Rabbi Rami Guides,” he humorously shares immediately relatable examples from his own life and avoids most theological, philosophical, and other complex terminology. He includes enough theory and history to make his point without losing the reader in an academic haze. Brief references to psychosynthesis, Morita Therapy, and 12-step programs provide some theory, and mentions of popular books, including *The Secret* and *The Purpose Driven Life*, provide contrast for his own thoughts. Drawing from his previous career leading a Jewish congregation for twenty years, he offers moving commentary on portions of Ecclesiastes and Job, about suffering and finding meaning in life.

The author’s current work directing the interfaith Wisdom House and writing a monthly column for *Spirituality & Health* magazine, along with his PhD in religious studies and prior rabbinical career, provide Rabbi Rami with both practical and academic knowledge on forgiveness.

He persuasively explains his unconventional views well in this easily relatable book that makes an enlightening read and a meaningful gift for anyone searching for tips on living a more emotionally healthy life or who is generally interested in self-help, practical ethics, religion, or philosophy titles.
C. WILLIAM GEE (November 29, 2011)

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