



# **Sapphire from the Land of Israel: A New Light on the Weekly Torah Portion From the Writings of Rabbi Abraham Isaac HaKohen Kook**

*Rabbi Chanan Morrison*

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**Sapphire from the Land of Israel** brings texts from Rav Kook's writings that deepen our understanding of each Torah portion, while providing a window into Rav Kook's thought. Rabbi Morrison's explanations are clear and meaningful, offering lessons that impact our religious and practical lives.

-- Rabbi Shmuel Jablon

Because of their poetic and mystical nature, Rav Kook's writings are difficult even for readers who are fluent in Hebrew and rabbinic texts. **Sapphire from the Land of Israel** uses a clear, succinct style to provide the reader with a window into Rav Kook's original and creative insights.

A companion volume to "Gold from the Land of Israel," this book presents more of Rav Kook's thoughts on the weekly Torah reading (*parasha*). It elucidates his views on many topics, including:

Why do we find different names for God in the Torah?

Why are first-born donkeys holy?

Why did the Torah need to give doctors permission to heal?

If "eye for an eye" means monetary compensation, why does the Torah not say that explicitly?

Why are only kohanim allowed to serve in the Temple?

Why doesn't the Torah explicitly state where to build the Temple?

**Rabbi Abraham Isaac Kook** (1865-1935), the celebrated first Chief Rabbi of pre-state Israel, is recognized as being among the most important Jewish thinkers of all times. His writings reflect the mystic's search for underlying unity in all aspects of life and the world, and his unique personality similarly united a rare combination of talents and gifts. Rav Kook was a prominent rabbinical authority and active public leader, but at the same time, a deeply religious mystic. He was both Talmudic scholar and poet, original thinker and saintly tzaddik.

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