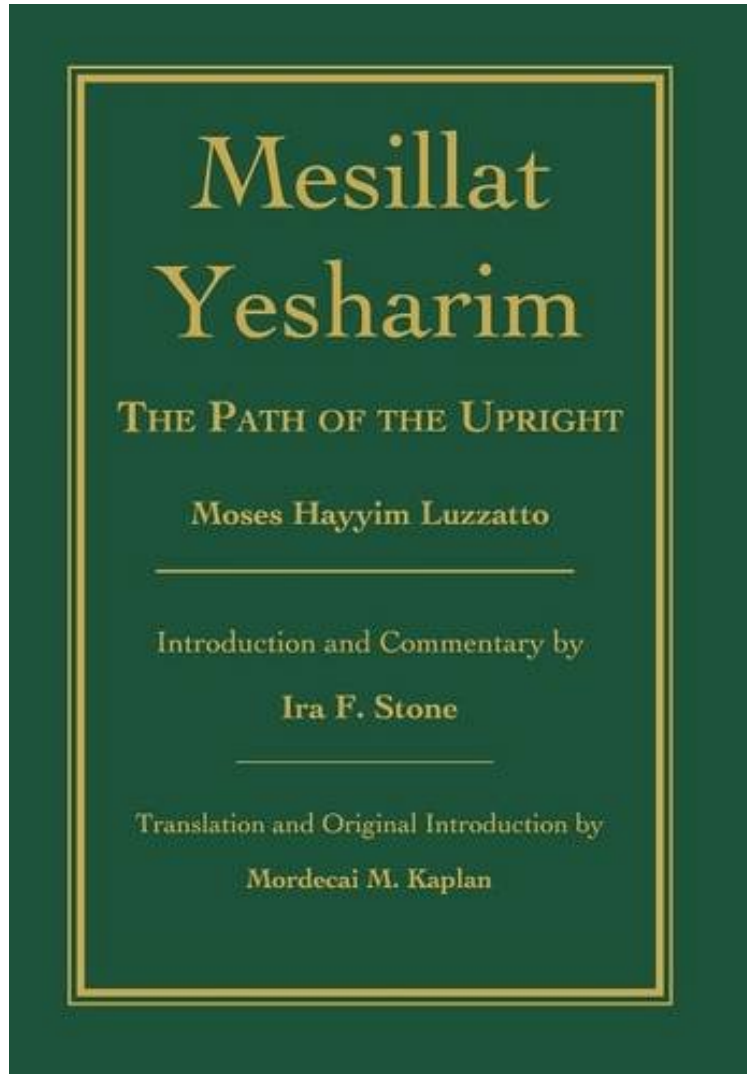


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Thanks to this generous donor for making the publication of this book possible: The Lerman Family Foundation. Connecting the wisdom of tradition with contemporary spirituality Mesillat Yescharim is a classic of Jewish ethical literature. Written by one of the leading kabbalists of the late Middle Ages, it is also a window into the kabbalists understanding of the connection between ethics and mystical vision. Luzzatto, one of the great Hebrew stylists of his time, is acknowledged by some as the first writer of modern Hebrew; thus Mesillat Yescharim is also important for its place in Hebrew literature. This translation, published originally in 1936 by JPS, is a landmark in Jewish publishing. It made this Hebrew text finally available to English readers, and it gave us insights into the groundbreaking work that Kaplan did in orienting American Jews to the deep connection between ethical living and religious belief. It is no wonder that this book has become the centerpiece of the modern-day Mussar Movement, which inspires so many on their spiritual path. Rabbi Ira Stone, consummate teacher and stirring speaker, is a major force in the resurgence of the Mussar Movement. In his introduction, he presents Luzzatto and Mesillat Yescharim in their historical context, and gives us new insights into Kaplans emerging theology. Stone also explains the principles of reading that he uses in his commentary and teaching to make this medieval text so inspiring to readers today. This volume contains the original Kaplan translation, as well as those sections of the text that Kaplan omitted, along with Stones new commentary. The original Hebrew text is in the back of the book.

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