The Jewish Publication Society
New Fall Books and Great Holiday Gifts 2017
The Heart of Torah, Vol. 1
Essays on the Weekly Torah Portion: Genesis and Exodus
RABBI SHAI HELD
FOREWORD BY RABBI YITZ GREENBERG
Discovering new horizons of the Torah
“Shai Held is one of the most important teachers of Torah in his generation.”—Rabbi David Wolpe, author of David: The Divided Heart
“The Heart of Torah is a stunning achievement: textually learned, theologically profound, ethically challenging, spiritually uplifting, and psychologically astute. If you want to know what it can mean to read the Torah today with your whole heart and your whole mind, read this book.”—Rabbi Sharon Brous, founder and senior rabbi at Ikar, Los Angeles
“Shai Held deftly brings the wisdom of Torah to bear upon the contemporary human condition. Christians who read this book can discover fresh dimensions within the biblical text, see more clearly where there is common ground between Jews and Christians, and better grasp what it means to understand and live in this world as God’s world.”—Walter Moberly, professor of theology and biblical interpretation at Durham University

In The Heart of Torah, Rabbi Shai Held’s Torah essays, two for each weekly portion, open new horizons in Jewish biblical commentary. Held probes the portions in bold, original, and provocative ways. He mines Talmud and midrashim, great writers of world literature, and astute commentators of other religious backgrounds to ponder fundamental questions about God, human nature, and what it means to be a religious person in the modern world. Along the way, he illuminates the centrality of empathy in Jewish ethics, the predominance of divine love in Jewish theology, the primacy of gratitude and generosity, and God’s summoning of each of us—with all our limitations—into the dignity of a covenantal relationship.

Rabbi Shai Held is president, dean, and chair in Jewish Thought at Mechon Hadar and directs its Center for Jewish Leadership and Ideas in New York City. He is the author of Abraham Joshua Heschel: The Call of Transcendence and is a recipient of the Covenant Award for excellence in Jewish education. Rabbi Yitz Greenberg is one of the preeminent Jewish thinkers of our time.

September 2017
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Steven Levy is an attorney and director of a real estate investment fund. Sarah Levy is a licensed neuropsychologist who lectures and works with children and families.

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