



THE WINGS OF THE SUN

Traditional Jewish Healing in Theory and Practice

By [Rabbi Avraham Greenbaum](#)

GUIDE TO THIS BOOK

THE WINGS OF THE SUN is an exploration of the Jewish healing tradition as taught in the Bible, Talmud, Midrash and Kabbalah, and especially in the writings of the outstanding Chassidic luminary, Rebbe Nachman of Breslov (1772-1810).

The Title

The title of the book, "The Wings of the Sun," is based on the words of the biblical verse, "And for you who revere My Name a sun of righteousness will arise with healing in its wings " (Malachi 3:20).

Theory and Practice

The book is divided into two main parts. Part I, "The Wings of the Sun," focusses mainly on "theory," examining Jewish teachings on healing from all periods, especially those of Rebbe Nachman. Part II, "In Practice," offers practical guidance concerning general healthcare, common medical problems, serious illness and care of the sick. Any suggestions made in this book are not intended to replace medical treatment where this is necessary. Those with medical problems should consult their physicians about following the ideas in this book.

How to use this book

Those wishing to investigate the Jewish healing tradition in depth are advised to read through the book in sequence. Those seeking information on specific topics may use the full [Table of Contents](#) to locate the relevant sections of the book. Where the subject-matter in one part of the book relates to material discussed elsewhere, cross-references are given in the text. Those facing illness or other medical problems may wish to turn directly to the relevant chapters in [Part II, "In Practice"](#). These may be read without having first studied the earlier sections of the book.

Newcomers to Chassidut and Kabbalah

A wealth of original source material is presented in this work, but the text has as far as possible been written to be comprehensible with a minimum of background knowledge. Nevertheless, certain parts of the text may prove difficult for newcomers to Chassidut and Kabbalah. This applies especially to the kabbalistic teachings in Chapter 12, and to Rebbe Nachman's Torah discourses in Chapters 18-19. If you encounter passages that you find difficult or confusing, do not hesitate to skip them and move to material that is more comprehensible.

Structure of the Book:

Part I: The Wings of the Sun

Part I is divided into seven sections, most of which contain several chapters.

Section 1: Refa'einu -- Heal Us! (Chapter [1](#))

General introduction to the book.

Section 2: The Jewish Healing Tradition (Chapters [2](#), [3](#), [4](#), [5](#))

Traces the Jewish healing tradition to its roots in the Bible and rabbinic teachings in the Talmud and Midrashim. The Rambam (Maimonides) and Baal Shem Tov are discussed as outstanding exemplars of two divergent trends in Jewish healing.

Section 3: Rebbe Nachman (Chapters [6](#), [7](#), [8](#), [9](#)):

As an introduction to the detailed examination of Rebbe Nachman's teachings in later sections of the book, this section provides an overview of the Rebbe's life and career, and surveys the development of his teachings on healing.

Section 4: Simchah for Health and Healing (Chapters [10](#), [11](#), [12](#), [13](#)):

For Rebbe Nachman, simchah, joy, is the key to true healing. Discussions about the Torah conception of health (Chapter 10) and simchah (Chapter 11) are followed by depth examination of the kabbalistic understanding of the soul-body connection, leading into a presentation of kabbalistic teachings on the ten kinds of pulse patterns (Chapter 12). This provides the background for understanding Rebbe Nachman's teachings on joy and the Ten Kinds of Melody as the foundation of spiritual healing (Chapter 13).

Section 5: Rebbe Nachman and the Doctors (Chapters [14](#), [15](#), [16](#), [17](#)):

Rebbe Nachman's opposition to doctors and medicine must be understood in the context of his teachings about the spiritual dimension of physical illness (Chapter 14) and also in relation to a trend of opposition to medicine among important rabbinic precursors, as well as against the backdrop of the state of

medicine in Rebbe Nachman's time (Chapter 15). To what extent have Rebbe Nachman's chassidim followed his warnings against doctors (Chapter 16)? How does his spiritual approach to illness and healing apply to us today (Chapter 17)?

Section 6: Sound the Shofar: Rebbe Nachman's Pathway of Healing (Chapters [18](#), [19](#)):

Rebbe Nachman gave fullest expression to the Torah tradition of healing in his Torah discourse, "Sound the Shofar -- Dominion" (Likutey Moharan II, 1). The first English translation of this discourse is presented with full explanation and commentary (Chapter 18), followed by excerpts from another major discourse of Rebbe Nachman on faith and healing (Chapter 19).

Section 7: The Wings of the Sun (Chapter [20](#)):

With the coming of Mashiach, a new world order of miracles and wonders will come into being, and the sun of Godly revelation will shine forth, with healing in its wings.

Part II: In Practice

[Chapter 21](#): Keeping Healthy. Diet, exercise, relaxation and breathing. Preventive medicine. Spiritual aspects of healthcare.

[Chapter 22](#): Common problems. Minor upsets, infections, injuries, etc. Spiritual healing strategies. The spiritual meaning of symptoms. Getting out of a rut.

[Chapter 23](#): Facing serious illness. Medical treatment. Faith. Redemption of the soul. Overcoming fear. Coping with pain. Meditation and visualization. Prayer.

[Chapter 24](#): Visiting the sick. Care of the sick. How those involved in sick care (whether as doctors, nurses, etc. or in a private capacity) can enhance the healing process through a warm, open, personal connection with the sick. Children's illness.

[Prayers](#) A selection of prayers for healing composed by Rebbe Nachman's leading disciple, Reb Noson of Breslov.

[Supplementary Readings](#) Additional teachings of Rebbe Nachman on healing.

[Sources](#) Full bibliography of works cited in the text.

[BACK TO WINGS OF THE SUN HOMEPAGE](#)

[AZAMRA HOMEPAGE](#)