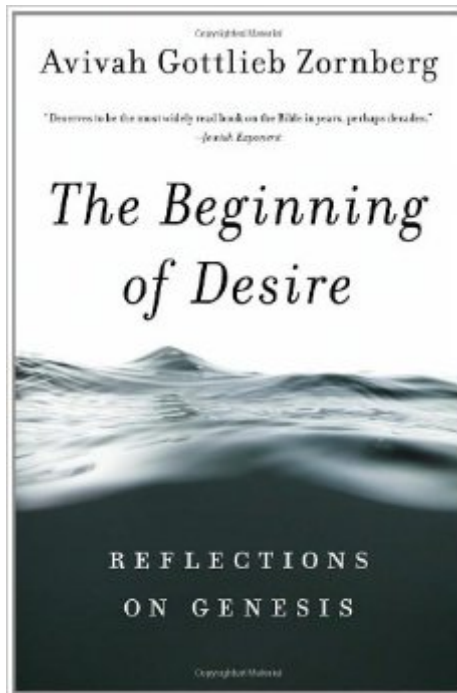


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# The Beginning Of Desire: Reflections On Genesis



## Synopsis

Winner of the National Jewish Book Award Since its publication in 1995, *The Beginning of Desire* has opened new pathways in the reading of the Bible. Avivah Gottlieb Zornberg's innovative use of midrash, literature, philosophy, and psychoanalysis draws deeply upon the familiar biblical narratives to produce interpretations that are at once startlingly beautiful and completely authentic. Illuminating the tensions that grip human beings as they search for an encounter with God, Zornberg gives us a brilliant analysis of the stories of Adam and Eve; Noah; Abraham and Sarah; Isaac and Rebecca; Jacob, Rachel, and Leah; and Joseph and his brothers.

## Book Information

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Average Customer Review: 4.6 out of 5 stars [See all reviews](#) (14 customer reviews)

Best Sellers Rank: #208,493 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #79 in [Books > Religion & Spirituality > Judaism > Theology](#) #178 in [Books > Religion & Spirituality > Judaism > Sacred Writings > Hebrew Bible \(Old Testament\)](#) #271 in [Books > Christian Books & Bibles > Bible Study & Reference > Criticism & Interpretation > Old Testament](#)

## Customer Reviews

I bought this book on a recommendation by a rabbi through an ecumenical reading group studying Genesis. Two of us worked together to read it discussing it section by section. We both learned a lot about midrash and how bits of Genesis have been evaluated over the centuries and found ourselves led to new appreciations of some of the major themes. Not for the faint of heart but worth the work. Academic in nature and psychological--reading it opens up new lines of thought about familiar material.

This is the definitive contemporary exegesis of Genesis. Zornberg is unique in her ability to integrate the insights of Rabbinic Midrash, critical literary analysis, and psychoanalytic Research. For me the result has been a plethora of 'I can't believe I never understood before' insights, that have blessed

me with a deeper and more nuanced understanding of Genesis.

We are reading this in a prayer/study group I attend and finding it to be challenging, but very good. The introduction helps understand the style and intent of the author.

Avivah Gottlieb Zornberg opened my eyes to the scholarly literature on contemporary thought about the Torah and the rich rewards discussing its meanings can bring even to one who, like me, is fully non-religious. Douglas Uzzell, Author of From Meaning to Desire

One of the primary texts for the new literary approach to biblical interpretation. Essential reading as are all Zornberg's writings.

This is a once in a lifetime book. Deep, profound and wise. It is an unqualified spiritual masterpiece. Highly recommended!

Brilliant insights, mostly Freudian or existentialist interpretation amazingly drawn from ancient midrash. Must be read slowly to appreciate it.

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