

Tanya Bickley Enterprises

Rabbi Shoni Labowitz

[Home](#)[Authors/Speakers](#)[School Programs](#)[Performers](#)[TBE Book Store](#)[Contact Us](#)

June 12, 2009



Rabbi Shoni Labowitz **Rabbi, Scholar, Spiritual Leader**

[\(Visit Shoni Labowitz in the TBE Bookstore\)](#)

In "**God, Sex and Women of the Bible**" (Simon & Schuster, 1998), Rabbi Labowitz explains, "I put women's voices back in the Bible and put God back in our bodies." Her book reinterprets the stories of eight Old Testament women whose lives represent the stages of a woman's life and sexuality.

Raised in an Orthodox Jewish home and descended from a long line of rabbis, Shoni, when a teen, rebelled against the restrictive and patriarchal Orthodoxy of her youth and took refuge in art, a passion which enabled her to express her free spirit. After receiving a solid foundation in traditional Judaism, she began studies in Buddhism and other Eastern religions at Barry University and continued with a study of the Kabbalah that led to an MA in Religious Studies from Vermont College. After rearing two sons, Shoni traveled to India on a "quest for knowledge." "There's no place to go when you're in India except within yourself," she says. Of the many answers she found there was the recognition of her heritage. Shoni decided to unite her Jewish heritage with an expanded sense of spirituality. She took the first steps to becoming an ordained rabbi. "It gave me a sense of fulfillment. Many Orthodox people will not recognize a woman in this role: I knew I was doing it for myself as well as for all the women who would follow after me."

She draws from various mystical traditions as director of *Living Waters*, a spiritual health spa, and in serving as co-rabbi with her husband, Phillip Labowitz, of Temple Adath Or in Fort Lauderdale, Florida.

Rabbi Shoni Labowitz says, "When a woman speaks her truth, it is holy as a prayer. At times the truth of another touches us so profoundly that it is a life-changing experience." It is with that form of prayer that Shoni Labowitz welcomes men and women to read her books and attend her lectures and come to know the truth about themselves and their relationships with God.

What others have said about Rabbi Shoni Labowitz's books:

On "God, Sex and Women of the Bible":

"Shoni Labowitz's 'God, Sex and Women of the Bible' is one of the most refreshing and grounded pieces of biblical literature for contemporary women available today. In this reading of scripture, women find a home. Here the Hebrew testament becomes a woman's book as well as a man's. We all need to read it--men as well as women."

--Joan Chittister, *OSB, Benedictine Sisters of Erie*

"If you have ever been troubled by the patriarchal dominance of biblical teachings, Shoni Labowitz's book will be a refreshing revelation. Rabbi Labowitz is a courageous woman who speaks her spiritual truth with elegance and power. Highly recommended."

--Larry Dossey, M.D., author, "Healing Words," "Prayer Is Good Medicine," and "Be Careful What You Pray For"

"In the tradition of the Kabbalah, Shoni Labowitz lights up the biblical text by linking it to the text of the body, so that the words become almost like a skin, and the openings to the inner body--for a woman, taboo even to the touch--reach to the ancient biblical authors. The original writers of "J" to Jeremiah are called upon in these pages, as Labowitz pierces the conventional veneer of the Bible to disclose a hidden sexuality that has been too long ignored." --David Rosenberg, author, "**The Book of J**" and "**The of Book of David**"--

"When I read the introduction to "God, Sex and Women of the Bible," I knew immediately that this book would be important. It has transformed my reading of the Bible, and should do the same for women everywhere. I am in awe of its vision, its scholarship, and its courage."

--Christiane Northrop, M.D., author, "**Women's Bodies, Women's Wisdom** On "Miraculous Living":

"At last, a book that provides the essential teaching of the kabbalah in everyday, commonsense language--sensitive, compelling writing--very, very helpful for those seeking a cleared vision on the spiritual truth."

--Dr. Wayne Dyer, author, "**Real Magic: Creating Miracles in Everyday Life.**"

Rabbi Labowitz explains re-interpreting the Hebrew Scriptures:

"Did you ever see an original Torah scroll? On white parchment the Hebrew words--without vowels--are inscribed by hand. Without vowels the Hebrew letters are just black shapes on white parchment. To give the letters sound, we give them vowels, which determine the translation and interpretation of the word...."

"When I opened the pages as if for the very first time, what I found in the Bible was that the Hebrew text itself does not denigrate women. Only certain ways in which the text has been interpreted does. How we choose to see ourselves in the Bible depends upon how we choose to interpret the Hebrew text and translate it from the original Hebrew into English. Each word in Hebrew has a root form, and depending on this root and the vowels used, the word can have several

definitions....

"An example:

"Then in the book of Ruth, we read about Naomi and Ruth. Naomi is returning home after a long absence and tells the people to call her Mara instead of Naomi. Since "mara" is traditionally translated as "the embittered one," the rabbis said that she returned embittered by her past failures. Yet "mara," as we found in the work "miriam," can also be translated as "the one who rises above difficulties." Naomi could have been telling the people that she was overcoming the challenges of her past and ascending to the next level of her spiritual development. The difference between bitter and rising is enough to change the images of these women from one that is negative to one that is positive."

Tanya Bickley Enterprises, Inc.
P. O. Box 1656
249 Old Stamford Road (*for express deliveries*)
New Canaan, CT 06840
(800) 965-3347. FAX 203 966-6340
tbickley@optonline.net

[Home](#) | [Authors/Speakers](#) | [School Programs](#) | [Performers](#) | [TBE Book Store](#) | [Contact Us!](#)

Entire contents by Tanya Bickley Enterprises, Inc.
Web Host: World-Wide-Net.com