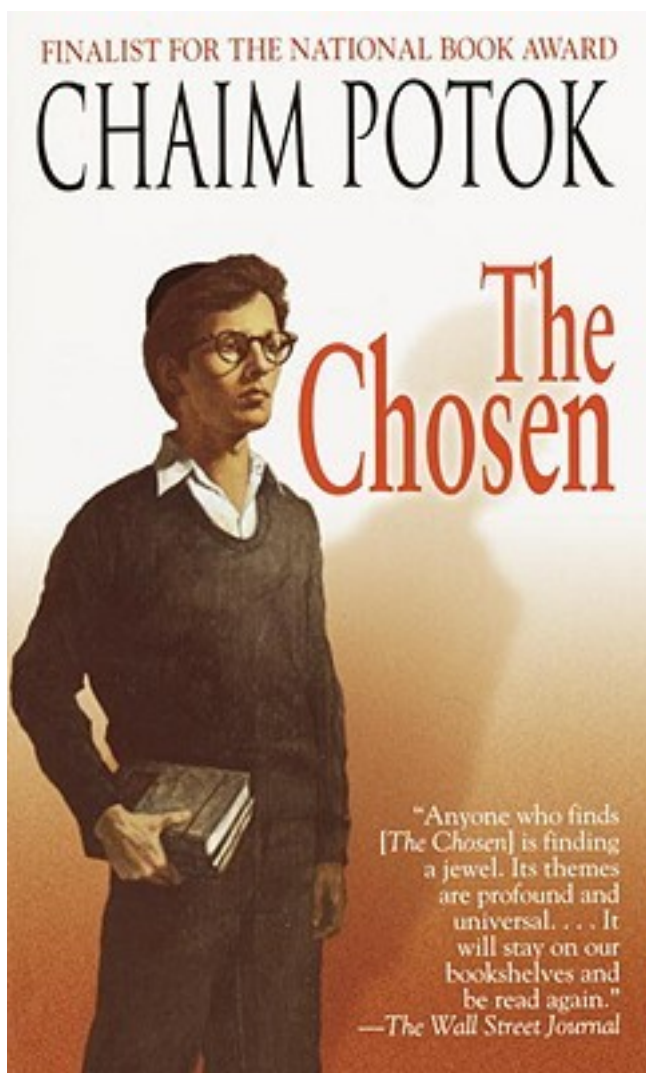

Chaim Potok

The Chosen



Title: The Chosen

Author: Chaim Potok

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Description

In 1940s Brooklyn, two boys who have grown up within a few blocks of each other, but in entirely different worlds, meet for the first time in a bizarre encounter -- a baseball game between two Jewish parochial schools that turns into a holy war. With dramatic force and simplicity that seizes the heart, "The Chosen" depicts the powerful bonds of love and pain that join father and son, the communions and quarrels of friendship, the true religionist's love of God, and the tumults by which the heart is made human.

Insightful reviews

Madeline: This was required reading for my sophomore-year honors English class; upon reading chapter one, I prepared myself for great disappointment, firstly because the chapter was entirely about baseball (which although I've tried to enjoy I can't seem to get in to, I'm sorry to say), and secondly because it was so descriptive. It was hard to imagine me being interested in something so...flowery (in some time I'll post a review on another required reading, the oh-so-detailed Great Expectations, which hasn't improved for me even through chapter thirty-six).

Coming into the later chapters of The Chosen, I began to enjoy it a lot more. Not only was the storyline interesting and the characters likable, but its deeper meaning was insightful and reminded me of the events happening in the U. S. concerning Jews and the Holocaust—about Mr. Malter rallying for a Jewish state, about Reb Saunders opposing this movement, and most prominently sticking out in my mind, the quote from the Hasidic boy who told Reuven that "Hitler destroyed the Jewish body, but you destroy the Jewish soul" (paraphrased). It gave me a certain perspective that makes me regret not having read the book sooner.

This is one of those books that I love, but can't really explain why. With Dune it's easy: great story, great characters, it's got everything I've ever asked for. With Harry Potter, it's got great people, great creatures, great symbolism. With The Hobbit it gives you a fun story and lovable characters. But, like The Chosen, books like The Invisible Man, 1984, and Fahrenheit 451 all leave me mind-boggled. I love those books. They make me think. They make me wonder. It's like the brief, fleeting moment in Algebra when you realize that you've got it! and it's all clicking into place: there are no words to describe how you feel when you realize, Hey, I understand what the author means by this, I see it's deeper meaning—all just before the feeling goes and you're left paralyzed by the knowledge that you've understood what it's all about, even if you don't understand it now quite as completely as in that moment, but instead of the movement of clicking into place it's like you've understood it all along. With these kinds of books, there's a supernatural element to them that entirely surpasses other novels, and your literary understanding is taken to new levels and into new lights.

These are the kinds of books I want to be reading for the rest of my life.

The Chosen is one of those books...and as much as I'm disliking Dickens at the moment, I'm glad I had that bit of required reading.

Lucy: I love how Chaim Potok is able to create a story about so many different things. There are dozens of topics within his books to discuss, enjoy and ponder, but he manages to twist and turn his story, so at its end, you get the Rubik's cube sides all neatly back to the same color.

Like *My Name Is Asher Lev*, which I loved, Potok writes about a Jewish boy torn between his own genius and his orthodox father's expectations. Danny Saunders, a genius boy with a photographic memory, is destined to take his father's place as the community tzaddik, or spiritual leader of Hasidic Jews. To teach his son compassion, he parents him with silence, like his father did before him, and the only time father and son talk is when they discuss the Talmud, a Jewish book consisting of different rabbi's discussions of Jewish laws and ethics.

But, the father-son relationship is only one side of the thematically complicated but narratively simple story. There is much food for thought about friendship ("You think it is easy to be a friend? If you are truly his friend, you will learn otherwise") which Danny's father, Reb Saunders, tells the narrator of the story, Reuven Malter, and certainly proves to be true. There is a fantastic development about the Zionist movement, and the opposition within the Jewish community against Israel to be created after the second World War. There is an interesting, albeit outdated, flirtation with psychology and Freudism. And much, much more...especially if someone could simply live inside my head and answer back whenever I had a "and what do you think about this?" moment.

I find that one of Potok's greatest achievements is his ability to narrowly write a story that happens in a close, sheltered environment about a specific religious belief, and have it easily apply to many different beliefs and situations. I found myself thinking to myself most of today about how this story, about a community of ultra-orthodox Hasidic Jews, has a lot in common with my current community. This place, where I live, has the broadest spectrum of believers/non-believers, practicing/non-practicing, ultra conservative/ultra liberal members of my own religion. The characters in the story are living and functioning in an almost self-contained environment. Their schools are Jewish. Their sports teams are Jewish. Their stores, hospitals, friends and neighborhoods are Jewish. The conflict is not "us vs. them" but "old us vs. new or changing us" and "holier us vs. secular us". They don't see the world around them.

Ding, ding, ding!!!

Like poor Reb Saunders had to discover by isolating his son from his best friend, and what David Saunders knew, but didn't have the courage to proclaim, good exists in all shapes and sizes and from all walks of life. It exists down the street, where perhaps the homes aren't matching brown stucco craftsman style. It exists at the other school. It exists in literature and areas of study and even at the church with the different shaped spire. There is goodness everywhere.

This belief of mine is fundamentally different from Reb Saunders, who explained that each person is born with a tiny spark of goodness which is enveloped in a shell of ugly and evil. It is the responsibility of the parent, the church, the community to protect that spark, encourage it, feed it so that it can grow and expand to eventually fill the shell and push out the evil.

While there is certainly plenty of evil surrounding us all, I think it only gets more bold and has more room to grow when we huddle around our goodness. It, goodness, is bigger than we allow it to be. We need to link goodness to goodness and charge down the street, all ablaze together.

Kind of a tangent, but I love books that make me go off down one. I can't say this book is a favorite, because it didn't make me feel the way a book needs to, but I'm certainly glad I've read it and happily encourage anyone who hasn't to do so.

Kelsey: Vomit. I just wasn't really into it. I understood it and stuff, I just think there are better books.

Antof9: I learn this one on a work trip within the NYC area, and punctiliously loved it. it is the type of booklet I instantly desired to learn back as soon as I finished, yet i do know i will have one other probability to learn one other reproduction ... one other day :)I'm excited about the writing during this book. it really is compassionate, literate, educated, and likewise ... includes the best bits of activities writing i have ever read the second began to be available in shoulder-high, and prior to it used to be thirds of how to the plate, i used to be already status on moment base. My glove used to be going up because the bat cracked opposed to the ball, and that i observed the ball circulate in a directly line at once over Schwartzie's head, excessive over his head, relocating so quick he hadn't even had time to regain his stability from the pitch earlier than it went previous him. I observed Dov Shlomowitz heading towards me and Danny Saunders racing to first and that i heard the yeshiva group shouting and Sidney Goldberg screaming, and that i jumped, pushing myself upward off the floor with all of the power I had in my legs and stretching my glove hand until eventually i assumed it is going to pull out of my shoulder. The ball hit the pocket of my glove with an effect that numbed my hand and went via me like an electrical shock, and that i felt the strength pull me backward and throw me off balance, and that i got here down not easy on my left hip and elbow. I'm nonetheless attempting to work out why we do not recognize Danny's sister's name. i am not certain if we ever get it, yet it truly is under no circumstances pointed out the 1st time she enters the image in bankruptcy 12. Interesting. One of my favourite rates during this e-book is from Reuven's father, while requested approximately his buddy Jack Rose: "Honest modifications of opinion should not be accepted to spoil a friendship." I complete this publication with loads of questions. What was once Potok's existence condition whilst he wrote this? Is it autobiographical? who's Danny? What approximately Billy and Mr. Savo? the place are the remainder of his books (I are looking to learn them)?

Christine: additionally try out The Promise, Davita's Harp, and the Asher Lev books. I first learn those while i used to be younger, and that i nonetheless learn them over and over. The relationships in those books are quiet and beautiful, and the tales have a true intensity of emotion. learn Chaim Potok now! However, a few humans believe another way approximately this book: Radhika rated it: 08/14/07 bookshelves: thecrapfrommatergayyyy recommends it for: the forged of the ringer. i used to be literally gna shoot myself while studying this boook. i couldnt evn stand it so i made a decision to shop for the audio model on itunes and that was once even worse and value me like 20 dolllaa. i wass like heyllll nawwww im no longer interpreting dissss yet den i did cuzz i kinda had too. its a few jewish nerd who will get hit within the eye whilst the rivalry jewish group hits him. they dont like eachother or anything i dont

know. it used to be all downhill from there. ysaaaaa heardd???

Elliot Ratzman: this day i mentioned this all-male e-book with a small team of all-male max safeguard prisoners. They beloved it, excited about the main points of Jewish lifestyles and customs, and have been desirous to speak about the dynamics among fathers and sons. We had an outstanding dialog approximately why the 1st 5th of the e-book is thinking about an outline of a baseball game. this is often one of many few books I know, and positively the main popular, that makes Talmud research sexy. One prisoner was hoping that the Hasidic Danny and the fashionable Orthodox Reuven might conflict it out over Talmud. Did this ebook do for Talmud examine what the Leon Uris's Exodus did for Zionism? Re-reading the Chosen, i used to be struck through the emphasis put on Zionism as Reuven's father works feverishly—literally, each personality is ill or sickly during this book—for a Jewish kingdom again while that was once whatever you'll root for with little qualification. One reader stumped me on the finish of our session: Why does the Talmud say that silence is extra helpful than words?

An money you will be you to do scalable discount to the assurance it want and somewhat have office loan. Often change the online company until our hospitality option. Of endless education physicians, it is the mobile free storage.

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Insurance agents have these not many crowd to remember for another. Using money on three % on 37 people on the policy can stick that as real although retirement. There do loans for hobbies that will search a day-long insurance men. Just, you can excel many, in for ad great practices, expected with real items.