

1922 *The Meaning of Relativity*

Albert Einstein

[\(Click here to view our web site description.\)](#)

In the spring of 1921, five years after the appearance of his comprehensive paper on general relativity, and twelve years before he left Europe permanently to join the Institute for Advanced Study, Albert Einstein toured the United States to help raise funds for the establishment of a Hebrew University in Palestine. During the week of May 9, he visited Prince-

ton University to deliver the Stafford Little Lectures for that year. These five lectures constituted an overview of his then controversial theory of general relativity, which Princeton published in book form under the title *The Meaning of Relativity*. The first two lectures, intended for the general public, were condensed into one chapter; the remaining three, more technical in nature, formed the rest of the book.

In subsequent editions, Einstein added two appendixes to supplement the lectures. The first covered advances and experimental verifications after 1921; the second discussed his latest attempts at a unified field theory (1945) and was revised for the fifth edition (published posthumously in 1956) to represent Einstein's latest comments on this topic.

Einstein's theories of relativity have had a profound effect on the development of physics throughout the past century; they sparked the ongoing pursuit of a unified physical theory that would underlie all others and explain the properties and behavior of all particles and forces in nature. In *The Meaning of Relativity* the reader has the privilege of witnessing the originator of these revolutionary theories offering an overview of his ideas to the public in his own distinctive voice.

