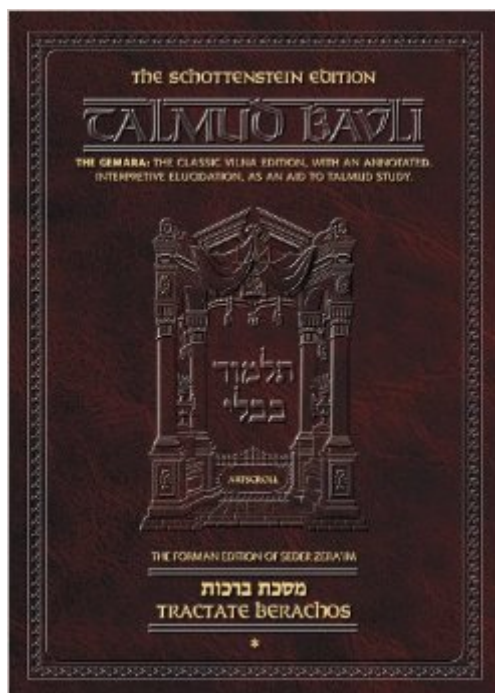


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Schottenstein Edition Of The Talmud: English Full Size, Berachos, Vol. 1 (folios 2a-30b)



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Customer Reviews

I have the full set of Jacob Neusner's translation (2011 ed., 22 volumes) and, like another reviewer, have been reading it side-by-side with this Schottenstein edition. I have little Hebrew knowledge and rely exclusively on the English. There's no question that both are excellent, and there's also no question that the Schottenstein edition is the better of the two. Schottenstein is better because it is

more smooth, more flowing, more of a natural read. It is also better because of the extensive footnotes that are often enormously helpful (and I say this as someone who usually dislikes footnotes, especially in religious text). It is also better because it is a handsome printing that does full justice to its subject. It is better because the original Hebrew is there, even for someone like me who can't read it. Finally, it is better because you can order one volume at a time. Many people will find that a single volume gives them an authentic introduction -- answering the question "What is the Talmud, anyway?" But I am very impressed with Neusner too. The main advantage is that it is much more affordable for the full set (currently, a bit less than \$300 for Neusner, compared to about \$1,500 for the least expensive hardback version of Schottenstein). The differences in the translation are not all that big, at least to a non-expert. Neusner uses more colloquial language from time to time, which sometimes spices things up nicely and is sometimes a bit jarring and discordant. Neusner is nominally the "academic" translation, while Schottenstein is the one that is acceptable to religious Jews.

If you're going to read the Babylonian Talmud in English, what is the ULTIMATE edition? This is a question I ask myself as I plan on studying Judaism one of these days. There are a few unabridged English translations of the Babylonian Talmud, one of which being Neusner's 22-volume *The Babylonian Talmud: A Translation and Commentary* which is a bit more accessible and cost-effective to the average reader of English. But after much research, I have come to the conclusion that the SCHOTTENSTEIN TALMUD is probably the "ultimate" version to get--but a lot of this hinges on whether the reader has a knowledge of Hebrew. I only purchased this first of 70+ volumes as a reference and comparison. Even so, I haven't had time to read it, but I have had time to collect a few first impressions, detailed below.

EXTERNAL IMPRESSIONS:--This is a VERY fancy and impressive-looking book. On the cover, the title and subtitles of the volume are in gold print and there is a detailed and raised "Schottenstein emblem". The title of "Talmud Bavli" is also raised on the cover.--The book has a cloth headband/endband. You can open this book to the very center page and lay it perfectly flat without having to worry about pages falling out.--For English readers, one possible negative is the fact that this book is BACKWARDS from our usual books. Here, when held properly, the spine faces your RIGHT side. As you read the book, the pages are also ordered so that you read the RIGHT page first, then the left one.--There is also a cloth bookmarker integrated into the spine of the book.

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