

F 603 Genesis: Jewish versions of Genesis in English

The most important English translations are the original Jewish Publication Society edition of 1917 (**JPS**) and the New JPS edition published between 1955 and 1984 (**NJPS**). In 2000, the JPS published a gender-sensitive translation with largely gender-neutral God language. The most recent JPS version is *The Contemporary Torah: A Gender-Sensitive Adaptation of the JPS Translation* (**CJPS**) published in 2006.

For liturgical purposes, the Reform movement uses *The Torah: A Modern Commentary*, Revised Edition, edited by W. Gunther Plaut and David E. S. Stein. It was published by the Union for Reform Judaism in 2005 as a revision of the original version, published in 1981. It includes 2000 **NJPS** translation and a new translation of Genesis and of the haftarot (by Chaim Stern). ISBN 978-0-8074-0883-4. Women of Reform Judaism has also published *The Torah: A Women's Commentary*, edited by Tamara Cohn Eskenazi and Andrea L. Weiss, URJ Press, 2008, ISBN 978-0-8074-1081-3.

The Conservative movement uses *Etz Hayim*, edited by David L. Lieber, published by the Jewish Publication Society, the Rabbinical Assembly, and the United Synagogue of Conservative Judaism in 2001. It includes the 2000 **NJPS** and commentaries and essays reflecting the Conservative approach to halachah. ISBN 978-0827607125. The 2000 **NJPS** is also the basis of the *Jewish Study Bible* (Oxford, 2004).

Prior to **NJPS**, synagogues often used either of two volumes published by Soncino Press in London: *The Soncino Chumash (The Five Books of Moses with Haphtaroth)*, edited by Rev. Dr. A. Cohen, 1956 and *The Soncino Edition of the Pentateuch and Haftorahs*, Second edition, edited by Dr. J.H. Hertz, 1962. Both use the **JPS** and contain traditional commentaries. The Cohen edition contains summaries of the classic Jewish commentaries, and the Herz edition contains his own commentary.

Two notable Orthodox translations are available: *The Stone Edition of the Chumash*, edited by Rabbi Nosson Scherman, published by Mesorah Publications (Artscroll) and Aryeh Kaplan's 1981 *Living Torah*, published by Mosnaim and online. Both of these editions incorporate rabbinic interpretations into the translation without always indicating when they are departing from the plain meaning of the Hebrew.

The *Koren Jerusalem Bible* (not to be confused with the New Jerusalem Bible) was published in Israel in 1962 with an English translation by Harold Fisch.

The following newer translations have important introductions and emphasize the Hebrew nature of Torah and the difficulty of translating the text into English: *The Five Books of Moses: a New Translation with Introductions, Commentary, and Notes* by Everett Fox, published by Schocken Books in 1995, ISBN 0-8052-4061-6 (English only); *Commentary on the Torah with a New English Translation and the Hebrew Text*, by Richard Elliott Friedman, published by Harper in 2001, ISBN 0-06-062561-9; and *The Five Books of Moses: a Translation with Commentary*, by Robert Alter, published by Norton in 2004, ISBN 0-393-01955-1 (English only).

There were attempts to translate the Torah into English prior to the first Hebrew Publication Society version, but they never attained widespread popularity: Abraham Benisch (England, 1851), *The Leeser Bible* (Philadelphia, 1853); Michael Friedlander's *Jewish Family Bible* (England, 1881), and Alexander Harkavy (New York, 1916, 1936, 1951).