



## The Talmud: A Selection

Norman Solomon (Editor)

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**The Talmud: A Selection** Norman Solomon (Editor)

**The most important text in Judaism after the Old Testament- available for the first time in Penguin Classics**

One of the most significant religious texts in the world, *The Talmud* is a compilation of the teachings of major Jewish scholars from the classic period of rabbinic Judaism. In a range of styles, including commentary, parables, proverbs, and anecdotes, it provides guidance on all aspects of everyday life. This selection of its most illuminating passages makes accessible to modern readers the centuries of Jewish thought contained within. Norman Solomon's lucid translation from the Bavli (Babylonian) is accompanied by an introduction on *The Talmud*'s arrangement, social and historical background, reception, and authors.

## The Talmud: A Selection Details

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## From Reader Review The Talmud: A Selection for online ebook

### **James Violand says**

Bizarre. And funny in a confusing way. Start with the premise that the Almighty is the Great Auditor intent on discovering whether you have screwed up in even the most innocent, minor way. Wham! He got you. At least that's what two rabbinical schools seem to have invented after the destruction of the Temple. One faction was in Palestine, the other in Babylon. Each throughout the ensuing 800 year history, tried to dominate the other. They alienated much of the Jewish world by their precise requirements - according to the editor - and considered them better than the rest. It got so convoluted, that I had to laugh at the argument over a hypothetical man not yet home when the Sabbath began. What could he do? Traveling was considered wrong. Well, they came up with an arbitrary distance from his house where the man could be considered home, to where each man could pool this allowance and line up through the town to the spot where the latecomer was standing! But what if a fence intervened? Do we count in the measurement the height of the fence? What if he is at sea? Can he see land? Then they discuss the height of a palm tree as some sort of measure. But which kind? The one in Palestine or the one in Babylon? These schools occasionally even curse their rivals!

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### **Mahmoud Haggui says**

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### **Stephen says**

Good addition to talmudic literature with a lot of material that I've never found in other selections of the talmud

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### **Jon-Erik says**

Anyone who wants to engage with rabbinic literature should use this book as a starting place, and you can pick your spot to go further in this ocean. This book serves as a much better introduction than some of the older, denser attempts at topic summaries (A. Cohen) or some of the other things that pop up on that kind of reading list.

The translations are good. For the price, you can't get your hands on more of the Talmud. Though I prefer bilingual facing-page versions of texts like that, the only English one I know of is Artscroll's 73-volume set, which is cost prohibitive for almost everyone to completely own.

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## **Rebecca says**

The rating here is for the editor's thoughtful introduction and annotations. The text itself - well, it's the Talmud...

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## **Daniel L. says**

### **A Monument of Ancient Thought Made Accessible**

To help students of the Torah better understand the work that stands at the center of Judaism, scholars started a commentary; over the years, this commentary included commentaries on itself, and so the Talmud came into being, a work in importance to the Jewish faithful second only to the Bible itself.

The Talmud includes commentary, proverbs, anecdotes, and histories, along with legal interpretation on the meaning of God's commandments in the Torah and the rest of the Bible.

It's a monumental work, comprising thousands of pages. For someone who wants to grasp the essence of the Talmud, an abridged edition is the best choice. Norman Solomon provides the excellent and reliable translation readers of the Penguin Classics have come to expect. Selections are representative of all six orders: Zeraim (Seeds), Mo'ed (Appointed Times), Nashim (Women), Neziquin (Damages), Qodashim (Holy Things), and Tohorot (Purities), with most of the 12 tractates of each order. My only misgiving is that the selection represents the first orders much more thoroughly than the later orders, leaving the impression that publishing constraints more than content dictated what was included and what had to be left out.

That said, this volume is a monument of scholarship, both in the very detailed commentary, extensive appendices, and - most important - detailed introduction. With this fine book, one comes away with a very good understanding of the fundamentals of the Talmud.

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