

Temple Jeremiah Torah Study

An Annotated Bibliography of Recommended Resources

1. A Torah Commentary For Our Times (3 Volume Series)
by Harvey J. Fields, UAHC Press, 1990
ISBN 0-8074-0308-3
ISBN 0-8074-0334-2
ISBN 0-8074-0511-6
This is a wonderful introduction to the study of Torah in three volumes. Rabbi Fields summarizes each portion and distills commentary from many sources to give a broad overview of traditional Jewish thought.
2. The Five Books of Moses
A Translation with Commentary by Robert Alter
W.W. Norton & Company, 2004
ISBN 0-393-01955-1
Alter teaches Hebrew and comparative literature at Berkeley. This book delves into literary and biblical scholarship yet is accessible to the general reader. It points to the ways a single Hebrew word can make all the difference in our understanding of the text, but it never loses the forest for the trees. In his introduction, Alter makes a case for the coherence of the Torah as a whole, while acknowledging it is "manifestly a composite construction" that was written and edited by many people over several centuries. Alter created an eminently readable translation and fascinating footnotes on various Hebrew terms. This may well be the best one-volume introduction to the Torah ever published in English. (Excerpted from Publisher's Weekly)
3. The Jewish Study Bible
Editors: Adele Berlin and Marc Zvi Brettler
Oxford University Press, 2004
ISBN 0-19-529751-2
Using the Jewish Publication Society translation, the books of the Jewish canon are presented in their traditional order: Torah (the five books of Moses); Nevi'im (the major and minor prophets); and Kethuvim (the other writings). Leading Jewish scholars introduce each book and offer extensive sidebar commentary, discussing the views of ancient and modern rabbinic scholars. In addition, the volume provides two dozen scholarly essays on different aspects of interpretation: the Bible's use in various periods in Jewish history, in the liturgy, in the Dead Sea Scrolls. There are essays on biblical languages, canonization, textual criticism, philosophical and mystical traditions, and biblical poetry. (Excerpted from Publisher's Weekly)
4. JPS Guide: the Jewish Bible
The Jewish Publication Society, 2008
ISBN 978-0-8276-0851-1
This is a clear and informative introduction to the Bible. It includes contributions from today's leading Bible scholars and educators as well as: summaries of all the biblical books, an extensive glossary, maps, charts and tables along with timelines and family trees.

5. The Torah: A Women's Commentary

Editor: Dr. Tamara Cohn Eskenazi

Women of Reform Judaism, URJ Press, 2008

ISBN 978-0-8074-1081-3

"The five daughters of Zelophehad in the Book of Numbers approach Moses, the leaders of the people and the entire community. They draw near because they see a problem that needs a solution: they have not been given an inheritance they believe is due to them. They refuse to be left out and demand their rightful share. And so they dare speak to Moses, the priest Eleazar, all the other leaders, and the entire edah (congregation or formally constituted assembly). They say: 'Give us a holding among our father's kin. Give us a share of our heritage, why should we be left out?' They get what they want a share, a large share I should add. Moreover, as a result of their courage, a new Torah law is created, one that intends to benefit future generations long after them. Their story is the story of the WRJ's The Torah: A Women's Commentary. The Women of Reform Judaism said: 'Give us a share among our brothers. We are no longer willing to be left out.' Instead of land, WRJ asks for something even more enduring - 'Give us a share of our Torah.' The result is a Torah commentary we trust will benefit all of us. With this commentary we will continue as sisters to empower the women - and men - who come after us for generations to come." Dr. Tamara Cohn Eskenazi, editor, Professor of Bible, HUC-JIR/LA

6. Torah and Commentary: The Five Books of Moses

Translation, Rabbinic and Contemporary Commentary

by Sol Scharfstein

KTAV Publishing House Inc., 2008

ISBN 978-0-88125-973-5

A new, highly readable translation of the Torah, Judaism's most sacred text, this book is accompanied by interpretations of over 2,000 biblical passages. The interpretations are by classical and contemporary rabbinic commentators, and the translation and commentaries are presented in easy-to-read language. The commentaries cover religious practices, history, theology, laws, customs, and ethical concepts. The volume is beautifully illustrated in color and provides background material about the Torah's place in Judaism, and the various ritual practices related to the Torah and Sabbath services. Also included and illustrated in color are biographical sketches of the most highly regarded biblical commentators, such as Rashi, Maimonides, and others. Sol Scharfstein's own comments relate to the contemporary message of the biblical passages. Torah and Commentary introduces individuals of all faiths to an encounter with the Jewish understanding of the Bible, the spiritual foundation shared in common by all the great monotheistic faiths.