

# Artscroll Stone Tanach

The following is a written summary of our [full-length video review](#) featuring excerpts, discussions of key issues and texts, and lots of pictures, and is part of our [Bible Review series](#).

## Do you recommend it? Why?

Two thumbs up! We highly recommend this Bible. Read on to learn why.

## Who's this Bible best for?

You'll find this translation useful if you're looking for a Tanach that's richly and authentically Jewish, literal and at the same flowing and poetic, and beautiful to both eye and ear.

## Would you suggest this as a primary or a secondary Bible? Why?

The AST is ideal as a primary Bible to carry around and read from on a regular basis. At the same time it doesn't feature the New Testament, so if you're Christian or Messianic you may end up toting two Bibles around - unless you have them both as apps, in which case all you need is your phone.

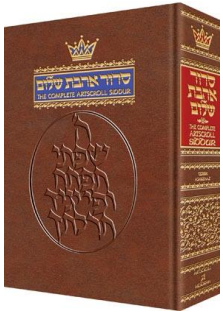
## How's this version's relationship with the Jews and Judaism?

Excellent. This translation will bring you closer to the Jewish people, and significantly enhance your appreciation for traditional Judaism.

A small example of how this Bible will deepen your acquaintance with traditional Judaism is how, at the end of each of the books of the Torah, it says *chazak, chazak, v'neet'chazeyk!* (be strong, be strong, and may we be strengthened!) This rousing cheer is traditionally said by Jewish people upon completion of each book of the Torah.

Another small example is how the books of Isaiah, Malachi, Lamentations, and Ecclesiastes conclude on a low note, so a positive verse from earlier in the chapter is appended to the end so the readings always end on a high note.

## Who's the publisher and when did it come out?



This Bible was first published in 1996 by Artscroll, an Orthodox Jewish publishing company that has been so successful in revitalizing American Jewish religious life that its impact has sometimes been called the "Artscroll revolution". Artscroll's books are especially popular with *ba'alei teshuvah* - Jews returning to the faith - and with Christians desirous of learning more about Judaism.

Along with [Artscroll's prayerbook](#) (which we highly recommend) and Talmud series, the Artscroll Tanach is one of their most popular works.

## Who translated it and what's their story?

The primary translator and editor was Rabbi Nosson Scherman (to the right), who was aided by Rabbi Meir Zlotowitz with whom he founded Artscroll in 1976 (to the left), and two other Rabbis. One need only read Rabbi Scherman's introduction to the AST to sense his spiritual depth and richness. His gift for expressing spiritual concepts with flowing poetic beauty and crisp lucidity is almost overwhelming. Watch the [video review](#) for examples.



## Is it more word for word or thought for thought?

The AST is a very literal translation. Technically speaking, it's a "formal equivalent". Not only is it very word for word, it also carries over the grammatical patterns of the Hebrew original into the English sentence structure. What's surprising is how this translation still flows and is easy to read, in contrast with other literal translations

that can be stiff and hard to follow.

An exception to this otherwise literal translation is the Song of Songs, which is embellished as an allegorical description of God's relationship with Israel according to Rashi's interpretations, with the actual text discreetly tucked away in the footnotes.

Watch the [video review](#) for examples of Hebrew syntax in the English and allegorical interpretations of Song of Songs.

## How are Hebrew names written?

Personal names are written in their traditional Anglicized form. For instance, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Rebekah, Moses, Joshua, Abigail, Solomon, and Isaiah.

Geographical names are also written in their traditional Anglicized form. For instance, Jerusalem, Hebron, Bethlehem, and Babylon.

## How are Hebrew book names written?

In the Hebrew/English version the names of the books of the Bible are written in their traditional Anglicized form - for instance, Genesis, Exodus, Joshua, and Psalms - and are also written in Hebrew.

In the English-only version, both the traditional Anglicized forms and an Ashkenazi transliteration of the Hebrew forms are written side by each. In this construct Hebrew words are written with a compromise between the Sephardi and Ashkenazi pronunciations. The more proper Sephardi vowels are used, but "t" on the end of words is written as "s", following the Ashkenazi pronunciation of consonants. For instance: Genesis/Bereishis, Exodus/Shemos, Joshua/Yehoshua, and Psalms/Tehillim, and Writings/Kesuvim.

ISAIAH/YESHAYAHU	601	• JONAH/YONAH	886
JEREMIAH/YIRMIYAHU	685	• MICAH/MICHAH	889
EZEKIEL/YECHEZKEL	773	• NAHUM/NACHUM	896
THE TWELVE PROPHETS/TREI ASAR	855	• HABAKKUK/CHAVAKKUK	899
• HOSEA/HOSHEA	857	• ZEPHANIAH/TZEFANIAH	903
• JOEL/YOEL	870	• HAGGAI/CHAGGAI	907
• AMOS/AMOS	875	• ZECHARIAH/ZECHARIAH	910
• OBADIAH/OVADIAH	884	• MALACHI/MALACHI	926

### *Writings/Kesuvim*

PSALMS/TEHILLIM	933	ECCLESIASTES/KOHELES	1137
PROVERBS/MISHLEI	1019	ESTHER/ESTHER	1151
JOB/IYOV	1055	DANIEL/DANIEL	1165
SONG OF SONGS/SHIR HASHIRIM	1099	EZRA-NEHEMIAH/EZRA-NECHEMIAH	1191
RUTH/RUS	1119	I & II CHRONICLES/	
LAMENTATIONS/EICHAH	1127	DIVREI HAYAMIM I & II	1229

## How are the names and titles of God written?

In the Tanach God's name is circumlocuted as *HASHEM*, which literally means THE NAME.

*Elohim* is rendered as God, *Adonai Yhwh* as "My Lord, HASHEM/ELOHIM", *Adonai* as My Lord, *El Shaddai* is simply transliterated as El Shaddai, *El Elyon* as God, the Most High, *El Kana* as jealous God, and *Yhwh Tzvaot* as

HASHEM, Master of Legions.

*Ruach Yhwh* is the spirit of HASHEM, and *ruach kodshecha* is Your Holy Spirit.

## How are key terms in the Tanach rendered?

*Acharit ha'yamim* is translated end of days, *chag* as festival, *chesed* as kindness, *chukah* as decree, *chukat olam* as eternal decree, *emet* as truth, *emunah* as faith, *hasatan* as the Satan, *matzot* as matzos, *mikra kodesh* as holy convocation, *mishpat* as ordinance, *mo'adim* as appointed festivals, *pesach* as pesach-offering, *shabbaton* as rest day, *sheol* as the grave, *sukkot* as sukkos, *tahor* as clean or uncontaminated, *tamei* as contaminated, *teruah* as shofar blasts, *torah* as as Torah, *totafot* as ornament, *tzedakah* as charity, *tzitzit* as tzitzis, and *kippod* as hedgehog.

## How are the Messianic prophecies interpreted?

Watch the [video review](#) for an in-depth discussion of how the verses predicting the Mashiach's coming are interpreted in the AST, why traditional Judaism is actually very "Messianic", and why Orthodox Jews have a better idea than most Christians of what the world will look like after Messiah comes!

## Does it also have the Hebrew text?

The original Hebrew text is included along with the English translation. There is also an English-only version that, if you can believe this, doesn't have as many pages in it. Similarly, Artscroll has recently released a Hebrew-only version.

The Hebrew text contains the holy name of God, spelled with the four letters yod/hei/vav/hei. Something to remember if you're coming from a non-Jewish background is that a book containing God's name has the status of a holy book in Judaism, and is to be handled in a very reverent way. On a practical level that means you should never put it on the floor, or put anything on top of it. If a Jewish person saw you mistreating a holy book in such a manner, they would be horrified. In such situations the instructions of the apostle Paul in 1 Corinthians 10:32 to "give no offense either to Jews or to Greeks or to the church of God" certainly apply.

### פרשת בראשית

בְּרֵאשִׁית בָּרָא אֱלֹהִים אֶת הַשָּׁמַיִם וְאֶת הָאָרֶץ: וְהָאָרֶץ הָיְתָה תוֹהוּ וָבֹהוּ וְחֹשֶׁךְ עַל־פְּנֵי תְהוֹם וְרוּחַ אֱלֹהִים מְרַחֶפֶת עַל־פְּנֵי הַמַּיִם: וַיֹּאמֶר אֱלֹהִים יְהִי אוֹר: וַיְהִי אוֹר: וַיִּבְרָא אֱלֹהִים אֶת־הָאֹרֶךְ כִּי־טוֹב וַיַּבְדֵּל אֱלֹהִים בֵּין הָאֹרֶךְ וּבֵין הַחֹשֶׁךְ: וַיִּקְרָא אֱלֹהִים אֶת־הָאֹרֶךְ יוֹם וְלַחֹשֶׁךְ קָרָא לַיְלָה: וַיְהִי־עֶרֶב וַיְהִי־בֹקֶר יוֹם אֶחָד:

וַיֹּאמֶר אֱלֹהִים יְהִי רִקיעַ בְּתוֹךְ הַמַּיִם וַיְהִי מַבְדִּיל בֵּין מַיִם לַמַּיִם: וַיַּעַשׂ אֱלֹהִים אֶת־הַרְקִיעַ וַיַּבְדֵּל בֵּין הַמַּיִם אֲשֶׁר מִמַּטְחַת לַרְקִיעַ וּבֵין הַמַּיִם אֲשֶׁר מֵעַל לַרְקִיעַ וַיְהִי־כֵן: וַיִּקְרָא אֱלֹהִים לַרְקִיעַ שָׁמַיִם וַיְהִי־עֶרֶב וַיְהִי־בֹקֶר יוֹם שֵׁנִי:

וַיֹּאמֶר אֱלֹהִים יְקוּ הַמַּיִם מִמַּטְחַת הַשָּׁמַיִם אֶל־מַקּוֹם אֶחָד וַיִּמְצְאוּ מַבְיָה וַיְהִי־כֵן: וַיִּקְרָא אֱלֹהִים אֶת־הַמַּבְיָה אֶרֶץ וְלַמַּקּוֹה הַמַּיִם יָמִים:

וַיִּבְרָא אֱלֹהִים כִּי־טוֹב: וַיֹּאמֶר אֱלֹהִים תְּדַשָּׂא הָאָרֶץ דָּשָׂא עֵשֶׂב מִזֵּרַע: וַיַּעַן עֵץ פְּרִי עֵשָׂה פְרִי לַמַּיִם וַיִּרְעוּ־בּוֹ עַל־הָאָרֶץ וַיְהִי־כֵן: וַתִּצְאָה הָאָרֶץ דָּשָׂא עֵשֶׂב מִזֵּרַע וַיַּעַן עֵשָׂה פְרִי אֶשֶׁר יִרְעוּ־בּוֹ:

וַיִּמְנוּהוּ וַיִּבְרָא אֱלֹהִים כִּי־טוֹב: וַיְהִי־עֶרֶב וַיְהִי־בֹקֶר יוֹם שְׁלִישִׁי:

וַיֹּאמֶר אֱלֹהִים יְהִי מֵאֲרֶת בְּרִקיעַ הַשָּׁמַיִם לַמַּבְדִּיל בֵּין הַיָּם וּבֵין הַלְּיָלָה וַיְהִי לַאֲתוֹת וּלְמוֹעֲדִים וּלְיָמִים וּשְׁנָיִם: וַיְהִי לַמֵּאֲרֶת בְּרִקיעַ הַשָּׁמַיִם לְהַאֲרִיךְ עַל־הָאָרֶץ וַיְהִי־כֵן: וַיַּעַשׂ אֱלֹהִים אֶת־שְׁנֵי הַמֵּאֲרֶת הַגְּדֹלִים אֶת־הַמֵּאֲרֶת הַגְּדוֹלָה לְמַמְשַׁלֵּת הַיָּם וְאֶת־הַמֵּאֲרֶת הַקְּטָן לְמַמְשַׁלֵּת הַלְּיָלָה וְאֶת־הַפּוֹכְבִים: וַיִּתֵּן אֱתָם אֱלֹהִים בְּרִקיעַ הַשָּׁמַיִם לְהַאֲרִיךְ עַל־הָאָרֶץ: וּלְמַשֵּׁל בָּנָם וּבְלִילָה וּלְהַבְדִּיל בֵּין הָאֹרֶךְ וּבֵין הַחֹשֶׁךְ וַיִּבְרָא אֱלֹהִים כִּי־טוֹב: וַיְהִי־עֶרֶב וַיְהִי־בֹקֶר יוֹם רְבִיעִי:

וַיֹּאמֶר אֱלֹהִים יִשְׂרָצוּ הַמַּיִם שָׂרָץ נֶפֶשׁ חַיָּה וְעוֹף הַשָּׁמַיִם וְעוֹפֵף עַל־הָאָרֶץ עַל־פְּנֵי רִקיעַ הַשָּׁמַיִם: וַיִּבְרָא אֱלֹהִים אֶת־הַתְּנִינִים הַגְּדֹלִים וְאֶת־כָּל־נֶפֶשׁ הַחַיָּה וְהַיְמָתָה: וַיִּרְמָשׂם אֶשֶׁר שָׂרָצוּ הַמַּיִם לְמַעַן וְאֶת־כָּל־עוֹף הַשָּׁמַיִם לְמַעַן: וַיִּבְרָא אֱלֹהִים כִּי־טוֹב: וַיְהִי־עֶרֶב וַיְהִי־בֹקֶר יוֹם חָמִישִׁי:

וַיִּמְלֹאוּ אֶת־הַמַּיִם בַּיּוֹמִים וַיִּשְׂרָץ: וַיִּבְרָא אֱלֹהִים כִּי־טוֹב: וַיְהִי־עֶרֶב וַיְהִי־בֹקֶר יוֹם שֵׁשִׁי:

## Does it open from right to left, or from left to right?

The Hebrew/English version opens from right to left, like an exciting Jewish sefer. The English-only version opens from left to right, in boring English fashion.

## Are the books in the Jewish or Christian order?

<b>נביאים / Prophets</b>			
יושע / Joshua	518	חגי / Haggai	1402
שופטים / Judges	582	זכריה / Zechariah	1406
שמואל / Samuel	646	מלאכי / Malachi	1428
מלכים / Kings	796	<b>כתובים / Writings</b>	
ישעיה / Isaiah	954	תהילים / Psalms	1438
ירמיה / Jeremiah	1072	משלי / Proverbs	1568
יוקאל / Ezekiel	1208	איוב / Job	1620
תרי עשר / The Twelve Prophets	1332	שיר השירים / The Songs of Songs	1682
יושע / Joshua	1350	רות / Ruth	1706
יואל / Joel	1356	אבה / Lamentations	1716
אנוס / Amos	1370	קהלת / Ecclesiastes	1730
ובדיה / Obadiah	1372	אסתר / Esther	1752
יחזקאל / Ezekiel	1376	דניאל / Daniel	1774
ישעיה / Isaiah	1386	עזרא-נחמיה / Ezra-Nehemiah	1814
ירמיה / Jeremiah	1390	דברי הימים / Chronicles	1874
יוקאל / Ezekiel	1396		

The books are in the traditional Jewish order of Law, Prophets, and Writings. The chapters and verses are also numbered according to Jewish tradition.

For a detailed explanation of the differences between Jewish and Christian Bibles, watch our [review of the Complete Jewish Bible](#).

## Are the chapters and verses in the Jewish or Christian order?

The books are in the traditional Jewish order of Law, Prophets, and Writings. The chapters and verses are also numbered according to Jewish tradition.

For a more detailed explanation of the differences between Jewish and Christian Bibles, watch our video review of the [Complete Jewish Bible](#).

## How's the general layout and navigability?

True to their name, Artscroll is famous for creating *sforim* that are true works of art - both for their aesthetic beauty, and their intuitive user-friendliness. This Tanach is no exception. The pages are well laid-out, the fonts are attractive and easy on the eyeballs, and the sidebar guides zip you right to the spot you're trying to find.

Notably, in the Hebrew-English version, the English translation is in italics, whereas in the English-only version it's not...just in case italics are a deal-breaker for you.

## What does it have for notes, appendices, and extras?

Each book opens with a soaring one-page summary anthologizing its storyline and salient points in viscerally poetic, Scherman-esque fashion. Seriously, this Bible is worth it just for the book introductions.

Succinct notes at the bottom of the page explain traditional interpretations of verses from an anthology of sources. For extra commentary, you can order the Chumash - containing only the five books of Moses. Artscroll also offers individual books with extensive commentary on each book of Scripture that come with our

recommendations for anyone desirous of understanding Scripture from a Jewish perspective.

A table listing the special readings for the fast and feast days is included at the front, along with the sweeping overview already mentioned.

Appendices include visual timelines of world history from Adam until the Second Temple era, family tree charts from Genesis and Exodus, graphics explaining how various offerings were processed, illustrations of the Kohen Gadol's vestments, the Tabernacle, and the Third Temple, and nifty maps of Israel.

The English-only edition also includes a 40-page 'Tanach at a glance' section at the end, summarizing the happenings and main messages of every chapter.

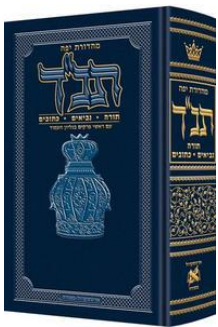
#### Appendices

<b>A: Timelines</b>			
Adam to Jacob	2024	The Families of Levites / The 24 Divisions	2036
The Flood	2025	The Families of Kohanim / The 24 Divisions	2036
The Era of the Judges	2025	The Mussaf Offerings	2037
The Jewish Monarchy	2026	The 48 Prophets / The Seven Prophetesses	2038
The Babylonian Exile	2027		
<b>B: Charts</b>		<b>C: Illustrations</b>	
The Seventy Nations	2028	The Mishkan and its Furnishings	2039
Abraham's Family	2029	The Kohen Gadol and His Vestments	2040
The Ten Trials of Abraham	2029	The Signs of Kosher Animals and Fish	2041
Jacob's Family / The Seventy Who Descended to Egypt	2030	The Third Temple	2042
Esau's Family	2030		
Listing of all the Animal Offerings	2031	<b>D: Maps</b>	
Procedure for Animal Offerings	2032	The Transjordan	2044
Procedure for Bird Offerings	2033	Territories of the Twelve Tribes	2045
Minchah Offerings	2034	The Thirty-One Canaanite Kingdoms	2046
Non-Altar Baked Offerings	2035	Borders of Eretz Yisrael	2047
The Tribal Census	2035	Levite Cities	2048

Watch the [video review](#) to see these features for yourself.

## How would you summarize the positives and negatives of this Bible?

On the positive side, this Bible is deeply true to the Jewish soul, absolutely gorgeous, and is loaded with valuable extras you're not going to find anywhere else. Not to mention it's available in a wide variety of shapes, colours, and sizes, as you'll see momentarily.



We don't have any strong negatives, but there are a few things we'd suggest you keep in mind if you're a newbie to Hebrew and Judaism.

Firstly, remember that there are two different ways of pronouncing Hebrew words, and that the Ashkenazi pronunciation used in this Bible is the less 'proper' of the two. So when you read words like *matzos* or *shabbas*, remember to read them as *matzot* and *shabbat*. Unless you spend most of your time hanging out with Ashkenazi Jews. Then you should probably just talk like them.

Secondly, while the notes and introductions in this Bible are invaluable if you want to understand Jewish thought better, you may not want to take them all as gospel truth. Orthodox Judaism tends to err on the side of taking *aggadah* as historical fact, even when it's historically anachronistic and highly improbable. (*Aggadah* is the stories and spiritual teachings of Judaism. The word is related to *hagadah*, which you may know from the Passover seder as the telling of the Exodus story. The opposite of *aggadah* is *halachah*, which are the legal and practical teachings of Judaism.) The difference is a fine line, and one to be walked with sensitivity and sensibility. On the one hand, there are *aggadic* stories recognized in the New Testament. Jannes and Jambres,



for instance. Or the rock that followed the Israelites through the wilderness. On the other hand, some of the more outlandish *aggadot* are probably what Paul had in mind when he warned against "paying attention to Jewish myths" in Titus 1:14. Here's our suggestion: if you encounter stuff in the notes you're unsure of, just respectfully smile and nod. And maybe don't go quoting it as historical fact in your next Sunday school class.

Thirdly, remember that, while in general this is a word-for-word translation, there are places where the translation follows the traditional Rabbinic interpretation of the text, rather than what it literally says.

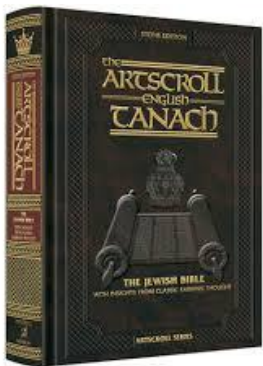
## Which formats can I get it in, and where?

The bad news is that Artscroll doesn't appear to have plans to release an ancient leather scroll version. The good news is that you can get it in pretty much any other format you could want, including digital!

The Hebrew-English Stone Tanach is available on Amazon in [pocket size](#), [student size](#), or a [three-volume set](#). It's also available on the [Artscroll website](#) in three different sizes and four different colours.



You can also get the Hebrew-English [Jaffa Digital Edition](#) for your Apple or Android device.



The English-only Stone edition is available in a [regular pocketsize](#) version and also a [leatherbound maroon pocketsize](#) version.

The Hebrew-only Jaffa edition is available in [pocket](#), [standard](#), and large-print [chazan](#) sizes.

We hope this review was helpful! Be sure to also watch the video review, check out our [Bible Review series](#), and [become a member](#).