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The Koren Sacks Siddur: A Hebrew/English Prayerbook, Standard Size (Hebrew Edition)



Synopsis

The Koren Sacks Siddur is an inspiring Hebrew/English Jewish prayerbook. The siddur marks the culmination of years of rabbinic scholarship, exemplifies the tradition of textual accuracy and innovative graphic design of the renowned Koren Publishers Jerusalem publishing house, and offers an illuminating translation, introduction and commentary by one of the world's leading Jewish thinkers, Rabbi Sir Jonathan Sacks. Modern orthodox halakhic guides to daily, Shabbat, and holiday prayers supplement the traditional text. Prayers for the State of Israel, its soldiers, and national holidays, and for the American government and its military reinforce the siddur's contemporary relevance. Standard (Yehuda) size, Ashkenaz, with dark slate Skivertex hardcover binding. Ideal for synagogue use.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Most Jews read the siddur, a Hebrew word meaning "order," implying the order of prayers, with little or no comprehension of what they are reading. They are no different than Christians and Muslim. All fail to fulfill the purpose of prayer. The Hebrew word for prayer is tefillah, which is based on a root that means "to judge oneself." Prayer in Judaism is more than a petition, the basic meaning of the Latin and Greek word upon which "prayer" is based. It is a time of reflection, of inner judgment, of considering change and improvement. The siddur is an anthology of widely divergent ideas that were composed by Jews - and non-Jews in some instances, like the ma tovu ohalekha prayer that is at the beginning of the siddur - with different ideologies over a long period of time. The siddur contains pieces from the Bible, such as Psalms, and poems written in the sixteenth century by

mystics, such as the prayer welcoming the Sabbath called in Hebrew *lecha dodi*. By incorporating such a wide spectrum of views, the rational and the mystical, old and relatively new, Jews are capable, if they understand the prayers, to reflect on what is being said, the history of their religion, the concerns of its adherents, see if and how the prayers relate to their lives, and ask themselves whether the prayer they are reading can help them develop themselves and improve society. Does the new Koren Siddur improve upon these matters and aid Jews in better understanding what they are reading? The answer is an emphatic "yes." Indeed this is one of the primary purposes of the new siddur. It aids Jews in acquiring all of the above-mentioned benefits by its manner of presentation, its translations and its commentaries.

ArtScroll. This word alone is enough to conjure up praise, disgust or tepid acceptance among my Orthodox readers. The publisher, which has been printing Jewish material since 1977, is edited by Rabbis Meir Zlotowitz and Nosson Scherman who spawned a revolution within the realm of Jewish publishing. The enormously popular ArtScroll Siddur, available in a variety of translations and styles, can be found in any American Orthodox synagogue today. And the company's vast collection of translated gemaras, TaNaChs and hashkafa-centered books have made Jewish learning accessible to an unprecedented number of observant and non-observant Jews. In my view, the Jewish world should be grateful for the establishment of ArtScroll. Before the company's vast library of prayer books and scriptural texts, there were few options in Jewish study available to those who were not fluent in Hebrew. Now, people actually have an idea of what they're saying and studying at shul/home/school/yeshiva, and this is a beautiful thing. But there are some things about ArtScroll I do not care for. Their translations are sometimes vague and often non-literal (*Shir HaShirim* is one of the more notorious examples I can think of regarding this phenomenon), they are less open to non-Charedi ideas and their "novels" frankly suck. This is where alternative publishing houses, such as Metsudah and Koren, come in. Koren is a Jerusalem-based publisher who, like ArtScroll, has its own unique typeface and style. According to [...], Eliyahu Koren in 1961 "set out to publish the first Tanakh (Bible) edited, designed, printed and bound by Jews in nearly 500 years.

Since the printing of the revolutionary Tanach in 1962, Eliyahu Koren and Koren Publishing have helped usher Jewish printing into a new era of artistry and spirituality. In 1981 they furthered the legacy with the first printing of the Koren Siddur, a prayer book that treated the prayers as poetry laying them out in an artistic way that made them easier to read and understand. Now with the help of the Chief Rabbi of England Rabbi Sir Jonathan Sacks, that wonderful siddur has been translated

into English providing a beautiful and informative prayer book that appeals to the modern Zionist Jew. The font is the same beautifully designed font Eliyau used in 1981, and is printed in what Koren Publishing calls their "Bible" paper, which has added high cotton and linen fibers to increase strength yet maintain thinness. Some of the innovative features of this new siddur include emphasizing the phrasing of the Tefilot with line breaks. Likewise, blessings are presented in two lines in order to emphasize the meaning. As a surprise, the Hebrew text of the prayers is on the left hand side of the page and the English is on the right. This, say the editors, allows the text to flow more freely. There are many additional prayers included, such as the Hallel which appears in the service for Yom Haatzmaut, Israel Independence day. An annotated prayer book, the source for many of the texts of various prayers is located in the margins, as opposed to the body of the text in other Siddurim. Also included is a halachic guide for visitors to Israel that emphasizes the centrality of Jerusalem. Most notably the translation conforms with the modern Israeli pronunciation of Hebrew. That means the hard taf sound not the soft ess which is a hallmark of Ashkenazi pronunciation.

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