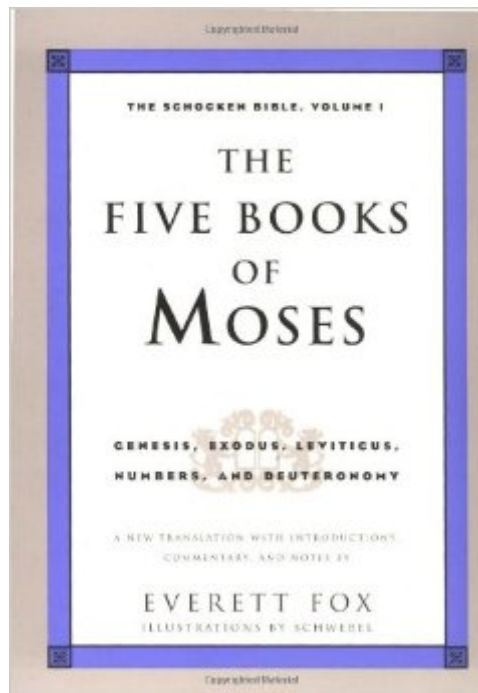


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# The Five Books Of Moses: Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy (The Schocken Bible, Volume 1)



## Synopsis

Widely acclaimed by Bible scholars and theologians of every denomination, Everett Fox's masterful translation re-creates the echoes, allusions, alliterations, and wordplays of the Hebrew original. Together with its extensive commentary and illuminating notes, this unique translation draws the reader closer to the authentic living voice of the Bible.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Everett Fox's translation of the Torah is plain and simple the finest translation from Hebrew I have ever seen. None of the other notable English translations, from the JPS Tanakh to the excellent Bloch translation of Song of Songs even comes close to the power and faithfulness of Fox's Five Books of Moses. He comes as close as is linguistically possible to capturing the rhythm, nuance, and grace of the Hebrew original as is possible in another language. Furthermore, when he knows that pure translation will be insufficient to capture a play on words-- how many native English readers even know the Bible is full of plays on words?-- he provides transliterations of the relevant Hebrew phrases as well, so the device becomes apparent. Some have complained that in forcing the English language to follow the patterns of a different grammatical system-- to say nothing of worldview-- he has twisted even poetic English beyond recognition. But not only is this text highly readable poetry, it reinforces with every word the nearly-always neglected fact that the Tanakh (the "Old Testament") was not written in English, or Latin, or Greek, and represents a vastly different set

of literary (and religious) endeavors than the Christian scriptures. It forcefully gives the reader a much-needed reminder that this is not the book you think it is. Most translations, in smoothing the text out into English prose and poetry, either sacrifice accuracy (e.g. the King James), or sacrifice the poetry (e.g. the JPS, which contains some of the least poetic poetry I can think of), resulting in an anemic set of verses bearing little resemblance to the wild, vibrant song of the Hebrew original. Fox's unique word-flow unpacks the dense Hebrew into a torrent of breathtaking imagery (e.g.

Schocken Press has undertaken an ambitious project, to retranslate the Bible into modern language capturing the sound and quality of idiom of the original languages as much as possible. The first volume of this project is available in *The Five Books of Moses*, Schocken Bible: Volume I, translated and with commentary by Everett Fox. 'Based upon principles developed by Martin Buber and Franz Rosenzweig, this new English translation restores the poetics of the Hebrew original--the echoes, allusions, alliterations, and word-plays that rhetorically underscore its meaning and are intrinsic to a text meant to be read aloud and heard.' The underlying premise of most translations of the Bible have been to clarify the meaning of the text. While this is certainly not overlooked here, it can be the case that in the pursuit of textual clarity, the ability to make it audibly intelligible gets lost -- a lot of passages from the New Revised Standard Version, for instance, are so precise in construction that they defy oral expression. Fox says in his Translator's Preface: 'I have presented the text in English dress but with a Hebraic voice.' Careful attention has been given to rhythm and sound. Too many English translations overlook the auditory quality of the words, and while striving to capture the idea of the text, they miss the crucial 'hearing cues' that an oral rendering would give the listener. To this end, the text is printed as if it were in blank verse (save where a poetic style was already present and could be carried forward). Proper nouns (the names of persons and places) retain their Hebraic forms; odd, though, that the title of the book is *The Five Books of Moses* rather than *The Five Books of Moshe*. Also, a principle of the 'leading-word' is employed here.

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