

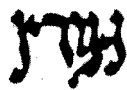
Talmud Ha-Igud

edited by
Shamma Friedman

BT BERAKHOT CHAPTER I

With Comprehensive Commentary

by
Moshe Benovitz



The Society for the Interpretation of the Talmud
Jerusalem 2006

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This book is dedicated by
Rabbi Benjamin W. Roth
to his wife
Marion B. Roth
and their son Jonathan David,
their son Richard Gershon
and their daughter Amy Reena.

May God grant them a long and joyous life.

It is also dedicated
in loving memory
to his parents
Rabbi and Mrs. Alexander (Sender) and Miriam Roth.
Thank you for your constant support
and instilling in me
a love of Torah.

תנצב"ה

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Preface

This volume is the second publication by the Society for the Interpretation of the Talmud. It was preceded by *Five Sugyot*, Jerusalem 2002, whose purpose was to introduce the work of the Society to the community at large. It presented a sample from the work of five scholars by presenting commentary on one sugya from each of five chapters of the Talmud researched and explicated in their entirety by these authors. These works are now slated for publication by the Society in their entirety.

The first chapter of Berakhot, with commentary by Moshe Benovitz, is the first in this series. It is to be followed closely by chapter seven of Shabbat whose commentary was composed by Stephen G. Wald, and the ninth chapter of Gittin, by the undersigned. Each of these three chapters represents a central and seminal area of talmudic law, and their publication will bring to fruition three of the five chapters represented in *Five Sugyot*. It is hoped that this first series will be further augmented to include a total of ten volumes, representing the first phase of the Society's work, namely, original commentary on chapters of the Babylonian Talmud devoted to the methodological goals formulated in the introduction to *Five Sugyot*.

The Society for the Interpretation of the Talmud was founded in 1993 with the goal of composing and publishing Talmudic commentary fulfilling the demands of an historical-philological discipline and at the same time authentically integrated with traditional Talmud studies. This determination was a direct outgrowth of earlier work done by the founders of the Society, and their fervent devotion to an intellectual approach which combines academic textual and literary disciplines with their desire to elucidate halakhic institutions and rabbinic thought according to their simple meaning and historical development. Applying this method to each sugya consecutively we hope to produce the first attempt at a contemporary edition of the Talmud meeting scholarly standards and addressing the intellectual climate in which we function.

The participants have joined together in this extensive project after several of them had already composed and published commentary on chapters of the Talmud.¹ The first phase of the Society's work included determining procedures and guidelines, and composing the first group of commentaries. Now, as we begin to publish these first fruits, we wish to express our satisfaction and gratitude for what has been achieved, and redouble our dedication to continuing the task.

As for the continuing work of the Society, we have already formulated the plans, and have embarked upon the second phase of our activity. As part of this phase, we expect to broaden our horizons to publication of entire tractates. Detailed assignments and work plans have already been established for the tractates Shabbat, Sukkah and Bava Qamma.

The creation of the Igud, and the initial realization of its mission, would not have become a reality without the dedicated friendship and support extended by individuals and institutions, whose participation and partnership in this great vision we hold dear. Full expression of our indebtedness and gratitude are beyond what I

1 S. Friedman, *Talmud Arukh, BT Bava Metzi'a VI: Critical Edition with Comprehensive Commentary*, Commentary Volume, Jerusalem, 1990; Text Volume and Introduction, 1996. S.G. Wald, *BT Pesahim III, Critical Edition with Comprehensive Commentary*, New York and Jerusalem 2000. M. Benovitz, *BT Shevu'ot III, Critical Edition with Comprehensive Commentary*, New York and Jerusalem 2003.

can express here. None the less, the publication of this significant volume is a most pleasant opportunity to express a small part of our appreciation to the following:

Keren Keshet, and its Director, Arthur W. Fried, Esq.

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Dr. Lina (née Forchheimer) Jeselsohn

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Anonymous

Special thanks to Rabbi Benjamin Roth for his support in publishing this volume.

May they all enjoy the fruits of our combined labors.

S.F.

Jerusalem

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