January 22, 2021

To: Lev Israel, Chief Data Officer, Sefaria

From: David E. S. Stein, Revising Editor, CJPS

Re: CJPS translation of the Torah (corrected): USX file and ancillary info

It is my pleasure to provide you with a validated USX file of a **newly corrected version of the cjps translation**, otherwise known as *The Contemporary Torah: A Gender-Sensitive Adaptation of the New JPS Translation* (2006). This package includes the fol­lowing items: (1) the USX file of the translation itself, including the translators’ foot­notes; (2) a coding sheet that lists the embedded character and paragraph formats; (3) a “.docx” file of the Dictionary of Gender in the Torah, an appendix that is frequently cited in the footnotes to the translation, and which explains many of the translation’s renderings; and (4) a corrected and annotated PDF file of the book’s preface.

This 2021 version of the translation incorporates over three hundred corrections.

### Footnotes

For this version, the footnotes have been thoroughly reworked and reformatted, an effort that was necessitated by the unfortunately unreliable condition of the source file, as well as the extent of the revisions to the translation itself. Happily, the footnotes should now be much more amenable to a database-oriented file conversion. I hope that Sefaria will enable users to get the most out of these footnotes by offering the translation with a dis­play option to either *show* or *suppress* the footnote callouts—and that the *default* set­ting will be to show them.

Most, but not all, footnotes remark upon a particular word or phrase that is spelled out as a lemma at its start. Some notes instead apply to what *follows* the footnote’s callout (e.g., the whole verse) rather than what *precedes*.

Footnote cross-references are generally made to a specific chapter-and-verse within the same book, without naming that book. Cross-references that are directional (“see pre­vious note”) are used only if the target note occurs within the same verse.

Unlike with njps, which employs a complex system of lettered callouts (which restart with each chapter and sometimes recur out of order), cjps employs only two footnote call­outs: asterisk (\*) and circule (°). The asterisk indicates an original njps translator’s note, while the circule indicates a note added to explain the gender-sensitive adaptation.

### Divine Name

Regarding the representation of the divine name in this translation, we have used the tetragrammaton itself. As you know, not all users will be happy with this. I’d love to see what the patterns of response would be if you were to you code the divine name sepa­rately and offer a set of instant global English substitutions, much as you already do for the Hebrew text of the Tanakh. What would be your users’ first choice?

That being said, a simple substitution will be workable only if it functions as a *name* (e.g., “Yhwh” or “Adonai” or “Hashem”) but not as an *epithet* (e.g., “the Eternal” or “the Lord”) in passages that contain a noun phrase that is apposed to the divine name (e.g., “our God,” “the Lord God,” “the Lord God”). This limitation is due to the conventions for appositions in English with respect to names.

For example, where njps reads “the Lord our God” (that word order being a Hebra­ism that does not treat the tetra­grammaton as a name), the present translation has fol­lowed English idiom and reversed the order, so that it reads “our God יהוה” (thus treating the tetragrammaton as a name, as in “our foremother Sarah”). Thus the simple substitu­tion of an epithet would yield the awkward apposition “our God the Eternal” (or the like). A more complex substitution of phrases could work, although it would need to take into account capitalization at the start of sentences, as well as vocatives.

### Paragraphing and Poetry

I have taken pains to provide you with a translation that is formatted in terms of para­graphs and poetic lineation, even though your present set-up does not seem to enable users to display passages or create worksheets that reflect formatted translations. The translators believed that such formatting provides readers with vital clues to interpreting the text. Hopefully you will soon achieve the ability to offer these clues to your users.

### Preface

Unfortunately, I do not have time at this juncture to go beyond the present contract’s scope by rewriting the book’s preface, which is now somewhat dated. Consequently, in the corrected version I have removed all cross-references to the preface both in the foot­notes and in the Dictionary of Gender in the Torah. Nonetheless, perhaps there will be some opportunity to link to the preface—for the sake of your users who wonder about this trans­lation’s history, goals, and methodology. If so, then please use the attached file. This is a slightly corrected and annotated version of what has long been available for download from the book’s product page on the JPS website.

### Proofreading

I look forward to checking the file conversion before the translation goes live. Let’s make sure that we don’t lose any “signal” and don’t gain any “noise,” so that this product will be as well received as possible by your end users.