

I find it very amusing that in being presented with the Talmud we are given a 10 page (9 if you don't count the cover) document and only a small fraction of one page is actually a readable form of the Talmud. The Hebrew page from the Talmud is not being

presented for the purposes of reading, but simply to illustrate the page layout. In fact, the vast majority of the document that we have is an explanation and description of the Talmud.

That we are provided with an explanation instead of the core document itself might initially seem a little odd, but in understanding the essence of the Talmud it becomes clear. As it is described, the Talmud is an ever changing, evolving document that consists of a core text surrounded by many layers of analysis and description. If we then take the view that the document we are provided with is not just a description of the Talmud but rather an expansion on it, then we see that the 9 pages we are provided with are in fact all a part of the Talmud.

In being a separate and distinct document, the description of the Talmud has become one and the same as the Talmud itself. For that matter, it becomes impossible for any idea that relates to the Talmud to not be considered a part of it.

-George Waksman