

Catholic and jewish rituals stemming from sacred texts

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In the last few thousand years, various religions have made the choice to record their various stories and teachings, to eliminate the “Chinese Whispers” effect that alters the details of these important themes. These writings are often utilised by those who follow the religion as a reference point to base their rituals on. The monotheistic religions of Christianity, more specifically Catholicism, and Judaism are both largely founded in their respective sacred texts and rely on these as a story to live by that guides and directs them through their ritualistic lives.

Some rituals comprised from elements in religious texts are the community worship, a day of rest and the use of bread as a spiritual symbol. The form of community worship used by Catholics is the mass. Traditionally, it occurs on Sunday morning, and it attended by the Catholics of the community (The Catholic Archdiocese of Perth, 2008). However, in more modern times, it is only the more devoted worshippers that regularly attend mass at a cathedral/church/chapel. Within the mass are many rituals comprised from bible stories, such as the reciting of the Our Father.

It is in the bible when Jesus is asked how to pray by his disciples, Luke 11: 1-13 (The Catholic Youth Bible, 2004). It was here that the Messiah first prayed the most well known Catholic prayer, which is used routinely by not only Catholics, but all of Christianity. The recording of this incidence in the sacred text provides a reference point for the ritual of prayer in Catholicism. Jewish peoples attend the Synagogue, where they also pray as a community. This community is split, men and women must worship separately, as combining the two genders will cause a distraction and reduce the focus the individuals may place on their prayer (Chabad. rg, 2012. During the time that is spent in <https://assignbuster.com/catholic-and-jewish-rituals-stemming-from-sacred-texts/>

the Synagogue, ritual dictates that the Torah is read at various points throughout. The Torah is made up of the five books of Moses, as it is said that on Mount Sinai, God tells him what to record. Among these books, are the 613 commandments. The most famous of these are referred to by the Jewish people as the 10 Statements (BBC, 2009), while Catholics name them as the 10 Commandments, as they place less importance on the other 603 than the Jewish people do.

The day of rest used by Catholics originated in the book of Genesis, where it is stated that God rested on the seventh day and sanctified it (Genesis 2: 2) (The Catholic Youth Bible, 2004). In present times this has been adapted to the expression, “ Even God rested on the seventh day,” reinforcing the theory that this ritual of rest is still observed in modern times even by those who do not follow the religion. This day of rest is called the Sabbath and happens every Sunday. Catholics take this to mean that if even God had to rest on the seventh day, so should they.

Those in Judaism also have the day of rest for the same reason, though the scripture reference differs though they call it the Shabbat and it happens from Friday at sundown to Saturday at sundown. During this time, they must fast and everyday chores and work are not executed (Judaism 101, 2011). Despite both rituals both being derived from the same text, they have branched throughout time to form the state they are both currently in, thanks to the numerous influences that have been placed on each. While, in one sense it could be said these originated from the same ‘ book’, this is incorrect.

Both of these sacred days began due to the direction God gave in the creation story, however, the two religions have significant differences in their sacred texts. From a Catholic perspective the story begins in Genesis 2: 1-3 (The Catholic Youth Bible, 2004), though a Jewish person would find it in Bereshit 2: 1-3. These are the same stories, being told under different names – Bereshit being one of five books of the Jewish Torah (Volker Doorman, 2008) and Genesis being one of sixty-six books in the Catholic Bible.

In Catholicism, bread is used in the Eucharist in memory of the Last Supper (Luke 22: 1-23) (The Catholic Youth Bible, 2004), when Jesus gave the bread of his body and wine of his blood to his apostles to symbolise giving himself to them, as he would be the next day when he was crucified. This meal was made immortal in the painting by Leonardo Da Vinci, which is known to most of the Western World. The current significance of this painting commemorates the importance of that night to Catholic peoples.

However, the bread is used in Judaism for an entirely different reason, during the Passover/Pesach (Exodus 12/ Sh'mot 12). During this time, they may not eat anything leavened, as is set out in Leviticus 23: 5 (The Catholic Youth Bible, 2004). The unleavened bread, which is usually braided to form a pattern in the bread, is the only bread that they are allowed to consume in this time. The Passover meal has enormous significance to the Jewish and Christian peoples, it marks the time that the ancient Israelites were freed from slavery in Egypt by the 10 plagues sent by God.

The most well known of these plagues was one that killed the first-born of the Egyptian families. The name comes from the presence of the lamb's blood on the door, which alerted the spirit that it was not an Egyptian inside, <https://assignbuster.com/catholic-and-jewish-rituals-stemming-from-sacred-texts/>

but an Israelite - therefore it must ' pass over' that dwelling (Historic Jesus). The various aforementioned rituals, comprised from elements in religious texts are community worship, a day or rest and the use of bread as a spiritual symbol.

They are all used by the monotheistic religions of Christianity, more specifically Catholicism, and Judaism - founded in their respective sacred texts and partially reliant on these stories as a guide and to provide direction to them through their ritualistic lives. Without the sacred texts, these religions would lack the structured way that they now operate and the true meaning of the stories would be lost among the many different tales.