

Compare christianity's baptism with judaism's brit milah assignment

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Compare Christianity baptism with Judaism Brit Mila and Piton Ha Ben? With reference to human experience and sacred objects. By slayer's Religious rites are conducted through the use of human actions. In this regard, they fit in with the normal sphere of human activities, but incorporate additional and enriching religious meaning. They are significant acts performed by believers in celebrating, symbolizing and making present the central beliefs of their religious tradition. Christianity and Judaism, both perform ceremonies to mark these transitions in believers from one stage in life to the next.

Baptism, Brit Mila and Piton Ha-Ben are a means of entering the Christian and Jewish community, respectively. The ceremonies for these events reach out in two directions: horizontally, into the community around them; and vertically, into time past and future. These rituals also use symbols and create human experiences to communicate and celebrate the transformation. Baptism may occur at any point in a person's life, but Roman Catholics believe that the sacrament of baptism is extremely important and should be performed as soon as possible following the birth of a child.

For Presbyterian baptism is an initiation into the church community as ordered by Christ. When a person is baptized, their sin, both personal and original, is removed. Water is used during baptism as a sign of cleansing and growth. Roman Catholic churches usually include a Baptismal Font, if it is an Anglican Church it will probably be at the back of the church near the West door. This is symbolic as through the pouring of the water, the child is freed from original sin and receives the Holy Spirit. As stated in the bible, " I

Baptist you in the name of the father... Son... D the Holy Spirit. " (Matt 28:

18-20) This rite has a historical connection between past and present for all
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Christians, since Jesus was baptized, so are we. Thus establishing a vertical connection. On the other hand, Jews believe that at birth man is pure and free of sin, so it is not necessary for the baby to be cleansed of sin. The Brit Mila enters the child into the Covenant that God made with Abraham and also into the study of Jewish Law. Just before the circumcision takes place the child is given a drop of wine, symbolic of Joy and also acts as an anesthetic.

The removal of foreskin is strictly a male initiation rite, however Charismatic is unisex. It symbolizes a sign of fertility, as well as an external sign of the Covenant made between God and the Jewish people. Like Christianity there is a sacred space and reference to scriptural passages. Brit Mila uses a table for circumcision and refers to the passage; " you will circumcise all males. " (Genesis 17: 10) Therefore it binds the present-day Jewish community together by connecting them with their common past.

The difference between an Orthodox and a Reformed Jew is in Reformed Judaism the procedure can be reformed by both male and a female, however in the strict Orthodox the ceremony must be done by a specialist called a mole, who is only male. Brit Mila does not make a person into a Jew as a Christian baptism would; it is only the first step towards becoming a Jew. Once the initiation rite has been performed, the child has then gone through a transition. Their status has been changed in their community. In Christianity and Judaism, the initiate has a clear setting apart of the community to show a change of status.

Traditionally In baptism, the child wears a white garment, white is associated with innocence and purity symbolizing their new life in which they rejected all

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sin. With Judaism; Just prior to the circumcision. The child is placed on the chair of Elijah, making the child set apart from the community. The prophet Elijah is considered the defender of the Jewish people's covenant with God who is symbolically present at the ceremony as a witness to the keeping of the covenant. Which has a vertical connection into the past. Another important factor to these ceremonies is the Godparents.

They play an important role in supporting the child and parents. The Sanded, Hebrew word for Godfather sits and holds the baby at some point during the Bruit, but not necessarily during the circumcision. Conversely, a baptized child is given Godparents to create between them and their Godchild a special link. They are present at the baptism as representatives of the Christian community; thus in the Catholic Church at least one Godparent is to be Catholic. They can often be significant sources of advice and support during the child's adolescence.

It is through the Godparents that they are able to connect with the wider community thus establishing a horizontal connection for the initiate. There are also blessings throughout the ceremony that mark the transition. In baptism the conclusion rite, where the priest or minister recognizes the initiate as a child of God by proclaiming a prayer called ' Our Father. ' The child now belongs to the family of God and can call God his father. The rest of the ceremony of baptism emphasizes the new faith, new life, and new dignity of the Christian, thus the child is now part of the community of believers, and hence change of status has occurred.

Likewise, in Brit Milah, the baby comes welcomed into membership of God's chosen race. The 'sign' in his flesh will constantly remind him of this. He is now a son of the commandment; therefore he has an obligation to fulfill. This then means the child is ultimately endowed with the responsibilities of studying the Torah, to marry under the canopy and live a life of good deeds. However, in baptism the parents are laid with the responsibility of guiding the child in the faith. The ritual of Brit Milah applies to a relatively small portion of the Jewish people. It applies only to the firstborn male child if it is born by natural childbirth.

It takes place when a baby is at least 31 days old, and involves "buying him back from a Cohen." (Numbers 18: 1-5) The orthodox Jews with Levi descent only practice it. In the past it was of primary significance as the ritual involved the exchange of money. Paying a small sum of five silver coins in biblical times; today, usually five silver dollars, and performing a brief ritual redeems the child. This procedure is commanded at Lev. 18: 15-16. As a result, the son is no longer obliged to serve in priesthood and this ceremony creates recognition to the tradition, hence symbolizing connection with the past.

A deeper reason why this is done is to remind us of the Exodus from Egypt, when God killed the Egyptian first born, yet spared the Jewish first born. Also, since a person loves his first born so much, it is a fitting time to re-acknowledge the fact that everything we own in fact belongs to God.

(Numbers 3: 13) In contrast, there is no similar ritual done for Christians. On a final note, in both Christianity and Judaism is that this rite of passage not

only functions to bring a person in a faith community, but also for survival of the faith and affirmation of the faith.

It is through the use of symbolism and the celebrants and others who attend experiences that shape their significance and impact on everyday lives of believers. Baptism, Brit Mila and Piton Ha-Ben both incorporate fundamental aspects of their respective faith systems. It can be deciphered that there are differences as there would be between any religious Tradition, but due to the fact that the core beliefs of the Traditions are originated by the same God and often some of the same Scriptures. It is merely interpretation and influence that have reshaped the ceremony.