

Free comparison between jewish texts essay sample

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According to Robinson (257), The Bible is a book belonging to the Jews since from it they derive the law, beliefs, and lore especially from the first five books. Most Jews study the Talmud such as the Orthodox while they derive their form of worship from torah or Pentateuch. Pentateuch is a Greek word meaning five pieces derived from Hebrew language. The author notes that the Bible derives different names to befit the protean form. The rabbinic literature refers to the Bible as Ha-Sefarim a Greek word meaning ta Biblia. The ancient Israelites used different books in reference to the Bible such as Kitvei Ha-Kodesh or Sifrei Ha-Kodesh. The present day Jews refer to the Bible as Tanakh. The name derives from Torah, Nevi'im, and Ketuvim. Most Jews refer to it as Mikra since it is read out aloud in the synagogues. The difference between Christians and Jews in terms of reference to the Bible is that Jews do not draw a distinction between Old Testament and New Testament of the scriptures as the Christians do.

According to the Jews, such distinction implies the Christian successor supersedes the Hebrew Bible. In supersessionism Christianity renders, Judaism obsolete and that issue precipitates debate in interfaith denominations. Jews stress on the use of Hebrew Bible since most of the writing appears in that language. Few passages appear in Aramaic since the Jews adapted to that language while they were in Babylon during the period of exile. The author provides two examples written in the Semitic language such as Jeremiah 10 and Genesis 31 spoken in the Middle East period. While in captivity, Jews communicated in Aramaic in their daily life. Other passages in the Bible that appear in Aramaic include the Book of Daniel and Ezra. The Books of the Hebrew Bible are as follows: in Torah, there is Bereishit,

Shemot, Vayikra, Bamdbar, and Devarim. In Nevi'im there is Yehoshua, Shof'tim, Shmuel, Shmuel Bet, Melakhim Aleph, and Melakhim Bet. In Nevi'im akharonim there is Yish'yahu, Yirmiyahu, and Yehezkel. The twelve Minor Prophets include Hoshea, Yoel, Amos, Obadyah, Yonah, Mikah, Nakhum, Habakuk, Zepfanyah, Haggai, Zekaryah, and Malakhai. In Ketuvim there is Tehillim, Mishleh, Iyob, Five Megilliot, Shir ha-Shrim, Rut,, Kohelet, Ester, Danyel, Ezra, Nehemyah, Dibei Hayamim Aleph, and Dibrei Hayamim Bet.

The entire Tanakh has 39 books that classify all the Minor Prophets as a single book. Additionally, 1 Kings, 2Kings, 1 Chronicles, and 2Chronicles are four different books. The ideology to detail the Bible as a collection of books dates in the third century B. C. E. The canon formation in the institutionalized Hebrew Bible contents takes place five hundred years later. The Latin translation of the Bible that take place in the thirteenth century enables the Biblical breakdown in Chapter and verse formation. The first writings of Tanakh dates in the eleventh-century B. C. E.

Robinson (310) cites that as Bible is the cornerstone, the Talmud depicts the foundation. The edifice of underpinning Rabbinic Judaism starts from the First Millennium until the present day. Some of the themes in modern Judaism include Reconstructionism, Reform, and Conservative. The Orthodox is a distinct sect that departs from laid down structures and norms established by sages in the Talmudic period. The author notes that the Talmud other related writings are at the center of Rabbinic Judaism. In the onset, the Talmud appears as a chaotic amalgam of folktales, legal rulings, conversation on different religious leaders, medical advice,

instructions for observance, and maxims and sayings. As one begins to perceive the underlying structure, Talmud bins to have meaning in their life. An individual can spend quality time studying the Talmud without an ability to demystify the mysteries behind it.

Robinson (311) elucidate that the Talmud in its simplest form consists of two parts the Mishnah and Gemara. Mishnah is a Hebrew analysis of the mitzvot biblical law from the rabbis' point of view. Gemara is an Aramaic analysis of the Misnah that will help to interpret earlier rabbinic commentaries. The subsequent rabbinic literature consists of Torah and Talmud commentaries. Most of the Rabbinic Judaism literature precipitates controversies in the nature of the Jewish ritual, observance, and law across the generations. The actual compilation of the Talmud helps one to understand to root the cause of controversies as well as the historical forces behind it. Every momentous change in the Jewish history that occurs through Haskalah and the Emancipation produces diversified opinion from various sects. The Jewish observes their life of worship in the synagogues after the destruction of the temple while they were in exile. Rabbis constructed the Misnah and Gemara to respond to the destruction of the Temple. Jews decided to create Judaism using guidelines and norms of behavior as a survival tactic to ensure the Babylonian exile.

As Ezra and others embarked on a journey from exile in Babylon, he read the Torah to the Israelites to encourage them to adhere to guidelines and regulations. Ezra hoped that by so doing it would help to re-establish Israel culture and principles with stability. Ezra worked Nehemiah alongside as they complemented each other in their unique roles. Ezra was instrumental to

depict religious concepts while Nehemiah played a political role. Both leaders impressed upon the people concerning the roots of tradition of rabbinic Judaism. The ability to trust on the reports of Judaism forms the basis of human society. A Jew relies on a reliable tradition in the heart of Judaism to transmit Oral and Written Torah where God reveals his instructions to the Patriarchs and Prophets. Torah has divine origins that make it unique in all other human traditions.

Robinson (412) says that human knowledge attempts to prove the existence of God as the Supreme Being that creates the world and resides in absolute truth. Saadiah's opinion is that that create the world pre-exist as a separate entity from the world. The Creator is a unity of one distinct from Christian Trinity and Zoroastrianism in the use of dual gods.

The Arab philosophers and Maimonidites that precede Saadiah believe on the plurality of God's attributes an implication that God is composite in nature. It is possible to understand different attributes of God through mortals' perception of the Supreme Being instead of the actual attributes of the Deity. Mortals do not have a comprehension to enable them delineate God's true nature in the proper language as God establishes corporeal existence.

Saadiah argument concerning Maimonides is that God created the universe out of free will other than necessity. That issue precipitates debates among different philosophers on the " argument from design" to the existence of God that helps the world to fit in a good pattern. The results of the design illustrate the work of an accomplished artisan, Ergo, someone that creates the world with all its contents, someone that had earlier on lived in the world

to create it later, or a Supreme Being with a strategy in all his undertaking. Saadiah derives logic from all the facets of God in the argument of design where he observes the importance of expressing gratitude to the creator by adhering to God's commands and instructions.

God establishes rules and guidelines for the Israelites to ensure they lead a fulfilled life. Saadiah considers that the observance of mitzvot is a sign of self-actualization and a way to give thanks to God for the payment of Creation.

According to Saadiah, mitzvot is in two categories those that understand by human reason and those that do not. Reason informs an individual the repercussion of ills that bedevil the society such as murder that lead to extinction of humanity. Reason informs that people object insults, and that makes them avoid insulting God or using his name in vain. Saadiah acknowledges a body of mitzvot that does not observe rationality.

Accordingly, reason helps one to understand the commandments. It is reasonable for a wealthy person to grant unnecessary employment to a poor person to confer a benefit to the impoverished person. It is reasonable for God to give humanity ceremonial laws since they permit humans to honor God as they strive to observe them.

The existence of mitzvot tends to defy our rational powers to suggest a role of Revelation as one of the primary objectives of Saadiah's philosophy. The philosophy states that without Revelation, it is difficult for humans to understand 613 commandments. Without revelation, reason can reduce from rationally derived laws to abstract concepts that have little importance. With no reason, it is hard to understand the basics of all the laws.

The taryag mitzvot is a valid law that states that all humans have a free will

with the capability to abrogate the commandments. In essence, God punishes those that disobey the commandments and rewards those that observe mitzvot. Saadia's argument on why the wicked prosper is that the duality of body and soul seeks to achieve fulfillment through physical embodiment. The world presents a lot of sufferings and to survive the soul should remain immortal.

Robinson (32) argues that Zohar is one of the medieval mystical literatures of the rabbis. Zohar states that all the sacred acts require summons. The rabbis' place Barchu next to the shaliach tzibur and during summon for worship. The rabbis intone that Barchu et Adonai hamevorakh and congregation responds that Barukh Adonai hamevorakh l'olam va-ed. The shaliach tzibur will repeat that response so that he enjoins himself with the congregation in the blessing of God.

Most of the earlier worship of the Jewish communities began with Barchu that compares to the Muslim call to prayer. The liturgy that precedes Barchu is the minyan that constitutes a private prayer to omit the call to prayer. Barchu marks the start of Sh'ma and its blessings since it is a series of prayers with central elements of liturgy in every service. Most of the text of Sh'ma appears in Deuteronomy to constitute a part of Torah study.

In the context of halakhic writings, Maimonides appears written in Hebrew for the committed Judaism. The readers do not have trouble of the apparent contradictions between halakhah and Aristotelian rationalism. The potential reader of Maimonides has apprehension for the contradiction in major philosophical work. The Maimonides writings also appear in Arabic to guide the non-Jews and Jews that find entangled in an intellectual quagmire.

The Maimonides faces attacks on Judaism by the neo-Aristotelian Arab thinkers. The main purpose of the work is to permit the Jewish readers reconcile with Aristotle and Torah to adhere to the faith of the ancestors while they still embrace rationalism. Maimonides is a man of science that encourages the young men of Sephardic origins encouraged to balance Torah study through trainings of that age as a physician. Maimonides applies his background of natural sciences that lead him to affinity for Aristotle; a great naturalist in classical philosophy on the catalogue and taxonomist nature of the apostle close observation. The knowledge of Aristotle has the influence of Muslim Aristotelians such as al-Farabi. The Guide depicts Maimonides trying to apply rationality with firm roots in the real world to issues of metaphysics and religion. The outcome depicts writings in the language of philosophy instead of Torah to assume knowledge on Aristotelian in the vocabulary of Torah and Talmud. Mishnah has the commitment to the traditional Judaism.

In 1230, twenty-six years later after the death of Maimonides some authorities placed The Guide for the Perplexed on some of the text and legal documents. The battle rages with specific ferocity in France for many years until the supporters and opposers of Maimonideans in a group of Dominican discard Maimonides writings. Both sides bear a lot of tensions to ensure that the battle subsided. At the beginning of the fourteenth century, a group of rabbis that oppose Maimonidean rabbis issued an edict to prohibit any underage person from studying Greek philosophy. The enduring conflict ended once Jews living in France embarked on a return journey to Middle East in 1306 C. E.

In the present day, Maimonides serve as a mediaeval Jewish philosophy with its work taught to the widespread Jewish population. Maimonides attempt to unite Aristotle, and Torah has a profound effect on the Christian world. The Ethical Writings of Maimonides and the Guide of the perplexed are some of the informative writings to the Jews to solve halakhic issues.

Judah Halevi (1075 C. E - 1141 C. E) survives in the era of Maimonides before Rambam has a central thrust to the philosophical work that depicts reason. Halevi is similar to Maimonides since he combines Jewish learning with the secular studies that goes along with a scientific concept and Torah knowledge. As a doctor, he has success in philosophy, Hebrew, and Arabic languages.

Jews are God chosen people and Adonai watches over them, the God of Jews is not the God of the philosophers. Egyptians and Jews that see the deliverance of the Hebrews from bondage in Egypt serve as witnesses to the covenant. Halevi interpretation of Maimonides is different from Maimonides interpretation. Halevi interpretation is from God's revelation to signify the relationship between Almighty and the Jewish people. In the same light, Baruch Spinoza strays from Maimonides traditional writings until excommunication. He is an excellent philosopher that emerges from the Jewish community whose popularity outstrips that of Maimonides.

Works Cited

Robinson, George. Essential Judaism: A Complete Guide to Beliefs, Customs, and Rituals. New York: Pocket, 2000. Print.