

MOSES MAIMONIDES

A Jewish theorist who inserted methodology into Hebrew contemplation. Many of his writing address Jewish law and ethics.

Biography

Born 1135 southern Spain

Died 1204 Egypt

Dad was a Jewish judge

Family fled persecution and anti-Semitism

10 years in Palestine. Went to the Temple Mount and Western Wall.

Then continued to Egypt around 1168.

↳ He was instrumental in helping rescue Jews who were taken captive during the Christian siege of a Nile delta village. (He sent five letters to Jewish towns asking for funds to pay a ransom to free the hostages).

Brother dies by drowning sometime between 1169 and 1177

Becomes doctor, for which he becomes famous.



Philosophy (major ideas)

The **highest faculty of the soul is the intellect**, and its highest function is to discern the true and the false

Kindness, righteousness and judgement should motivate the moral life

Codified Jewish law and revolutionized Jewish thinking.

↳ Maimonides brought Jewish law to the people primarily by creating the thirteen articles of faith and **collecting significant Jewish texts into one book: the Torah**

According to Maimonides, **Jesus was the most influential, and consequently, the most damaging of all false messiahs.**

↳ “Messiah” is a future Jewish king from the Davidic line; Maimonides rejects Jesus in this role

The purpose of life is to convert the potentiality of perfection into the actuality of it

The existence of God is subject to rational demonstration

Maimonides: The Philosopher Rabbi (5 min, 16 sec)

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5QDLe_PK7to&list=RDLVrR5uHapnOsU&index=4

↳ More of a cultural context, with anti-Semitism

Great Debates in Jewish History (7 min, 45 sec)

“Maimonides: Life and Legacy”

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rR5uHapnOsU>