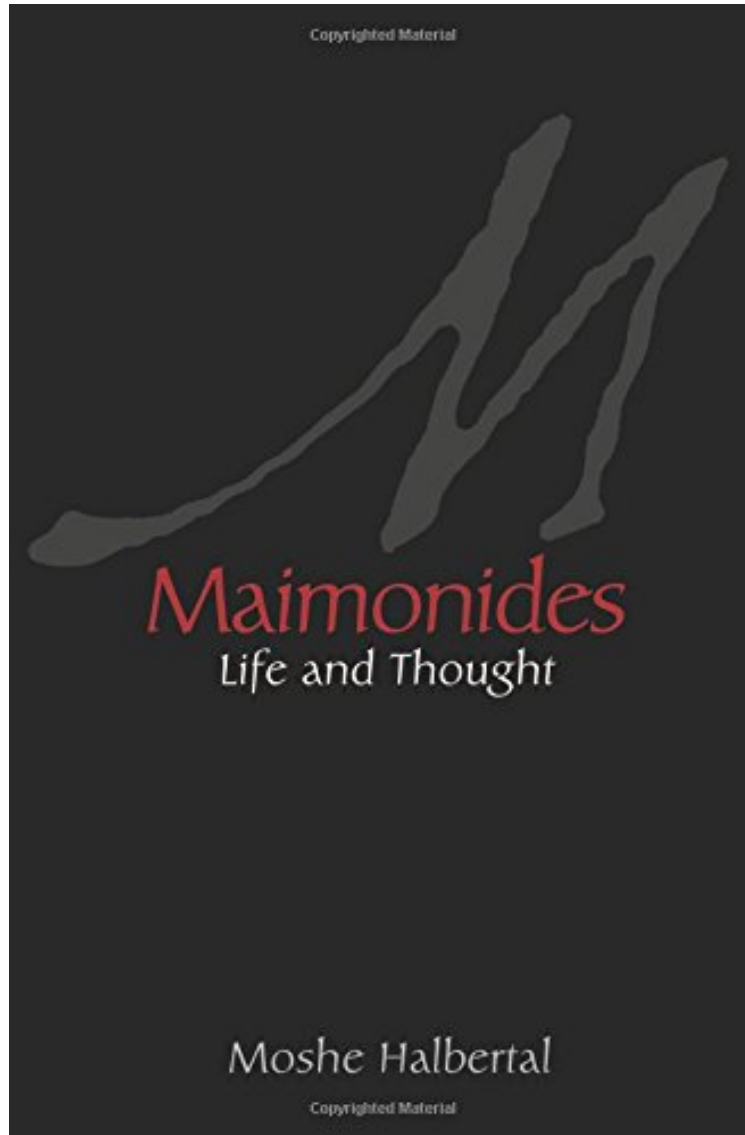


(Download pdf) Maimonides: Life and Thought

Maimonides: Life and Thought

Moshe Halbertal

*audiobook / *ebooks / Download PDF / ePub / DOC*



[Download](#)

[Read Online](#)

#365620 in Books Halbertal Moshe 2015-06-02Original language:EnglishPDF # 1 9.10 x 1.00 x 6.10l, .0
#File Name: 0691165661400 pagesMaimonides Life and Thought | File size: 62.Mb

Moshe Halbertal : Maimonides: Life and Thought before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Maimonides: Life and Thought:

8 of 8 people found the following review helpful. A Religious Path Through ScienceBy Dr. Debra Jan BibelIn Cordoba, Spain, is a statue of Moses ibn Maimon, Maimonides, for he was born in that Andalusian city during the cosmopolitan Golden Age of Sefarad. The common language was Arabic, even when written in Hebrew letters. The science of experimentation was yet centuries to come but Aristotle and Galen and other Greek thinkers, translated by

Muslim scholars, yet offered logic and some understanding of nature, structure, function, and causality. The philosophical Maimonides offered science and knowledge as a key religious path leading to awe and love or compassion. He attacked superstitions, talismans, and causative incantations and any anthropomorphic conception of God, even in use of personal pronouns, as de facto idolatry. He took the Babylonian Talmud and the body of subsequent traditions and created essentially a practical, categorized moral and legal handbook, the Mishneh Torah, separating core teachings from doubtful or obsolete interpretations. Moreover, his Guide to the Perplexed, because of its ambiguity, became a religious map with four interrelated paths whose philosophical, skeptical, mystical, or orthodox approach would depend on an individual's education and provisional predilection. Maimonides had a deep understanding and respect for people's psychological needs, even if contrary to scientific logic. Author and scholar Moshe Halbertal's book provides a penetrating look into the mind of this great religious thinker. While some of the sections discussing the Mishnah Torah become tedious and turbid by its detail legal analysis and historic comparisons of wisdom, the later examination of the Guide to the Perplexed is stunningly clear and comprehensive. The book examines Maimonides' views on evil and its personal, legal, and biological forms; on destiny of individuals and of species; on cosmic origins; on miracles versus logic and knowledge; on divine punishment and reward for governance and social order versus personal spiritual developmental gains and blocks; and on love and awe as steps toward perfection and experiencing the divine. The medieval mind and social outlook is revealed yet the reader also finds modern thinking and connections to the later Jewish philosopher, Spinoza. I grew up hearing about Maimonides without actually knowing anything about his great writings. Halbertal fills that void with an insightful book. Maimonides now become relevant to my own religious pursuits. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. The definitive account of the Rambam By Mr. Shaun Jackson Moshe Halbertal has written the definitive account of the Rambam. Halbertal has placed all of his works in the context of the Rambam's own biography which in itself is fascinating. I did not appreciate that the Rambam was a refugee from a young age, and this feeling of being an 'outsider' had an important influence on his works. Halbertal has an incredible capacity to explain esoteric and difficult language in clear and simple language. Philosophic concepts are easily understood. For example his explanation of 'will' and 'wisdom' (the world was created ex nilo as opposed to being eternal) and what the broader implications this has for the Rambam's thought is made easily understandable to the lay person. At the end of the book, one is left with a real appreciation of the Rambam's brilliance and his attempt to develop a new philosophic approach to Rambam. However, at the same time, he leaves it still open as to who the real Rambam was and leaves us with 4 possible approaches. The old simplistic approach to the Rambam advanced by the likes of Leo Strauss who thought that there was a great chasm between the Rambam of the Mishneh Torah and the Rambam of Moreh Nevuchim strikes me as remarkably unsophisticated after reading this book. 1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. A Great Treasure By David G. Of the four or five books I've read devoted to Maimonides this is the most comprehensive and the best of the lot. While scholarly it is quite readable for the intelligent reader. Most illuminating is Halbertal's treatment of the esoteric, of Maimonides' approach to Jewish mysticism, proposing possible answers to questions I've had for some time and compounded with each new read until now. Halbertal is a great mind and a beautiful writer, clear and precise.

Maimonides was the greatest Jewish philosopher and legal scholar of the medieval period, a towering figure who has had a profound and lasting influence on Jewish law, philosophy, and religious consciousness. This book provides a comprehensive and accessible introduction to his life and work, revealing how his philosophical sensibility and outlook informed his interpretation of Jewish tradition. Moshe Halbertal vividly describes Maimonides's childhood in Muslim Spain, his family's flight to North Africa to escape persecution, and their eventual resettling in Egypt. He draws on Maimonides's letters and the testimonies of his contemporaries, both Muslims and Jews, to offer new insights into his personality and the circumstances that shaped his thinking. Halbertal then turns to Maimonides's legal and philosophical work, analyzing his three great books--Commentary on the Mishnah, the Mishneh Torah, and the Guide of the Perplexed. He discusses Maimonides's battle against all attempts to personify God, his conviction that God's presence in the world is mediated through the natural order rather than through miracles, and his locating of philosophy and science at the summit of the religious life of Torah. Halbertal examines Maimonides's philosophical positions on fundamental questions such as the nature and limits of religious language, creation and nature, prophecy, providence, the problem of evil, and the meaning of the commandments. A stunning achievement, Maimonides offers an unparalleled look at the life and thought of this important Jewish philosopher, scholar, and theologian.

Winner of the 2013 National Jewish Book Award in Scholarship, Jewish Book Council Honorable Mention for the 2015 PROSE Award in Theology Religious Studies, Association of American Publishers One of Choice's Outstanding Academic Titles for 2014 "In his rigorous and insightful study Maimonides: Life and Thought, Moshe Halbertal reintroduces readers to this rabbi-scientist, who insisted that faith should be an enterprise based on reason."--Dara Horn, Wall Street Journal "[M]agisterial. . . Halbertal presents a moving and detailed portrait of Maimonides's life as well as his work. . . Maimonides is not just a titan of Jewish learning; as Halbertal shows in his timely and definitive

book, he can be a surprisingly contemporary guide for our times."--David Mikics, *Forward*"[Halbertal] pioneers a new path, walking the reader through the different interpretive schools and explaining what supports each one while acknowledging that Maimonides contradicts himself both across and within his many writings--at times purposefully, which inevitably leaves his readers perplexed. Halbertal is a wonderful guide, explaining how different approaches illuminate Maimonides' writings and how certain issues reverberate throughout the sage's work, returning in new forms and contexts. . . . Drawing on all of Maimonides' writings, and especially his many letters, Halbertal crafts a portrait of a refugee who never fully left home and felt the pain of exile for his entire life. . . . [An] extraordinary book."--Jay M. Harris, *Foreign Affairs*"In a sea of literature about the great twelfth-century Jewish sage and philosopher, one could do no better than turn to Moshe Halbertal's single volume work on Maimonides. . . . Accessible to both scholar and interested general reader, this book should be the first work on Maimonides for an English reader to approach."--David Tesler, *Association of Jewish Libraries*"If you are going to read only one book about Maimonides, make it Moshe Halbertal's stunning Maimonides. Even if you have read many other books by and about Maimonides, you have much to learn here."--Menachem Kellner, *AJS*"Halbertal's book provides an introduction to the complexity of Maimonides's work, and should be studied by any serious Maimonides scholar."--Tamar Rudavsky, *Journal of the History of Philosophy*"Maimonides, then, remains an elusive and fascinating figure: his importance is clear, but it's hard to grasp exactly what made him so important. That is why Maimonides: Life and Thought, the new study by Moshe Halbertal, is such a valuable contribution. . . . Readers who are curious about this difficult but rewarding thinker will find Maimonides: Life and Thought a thrillingly lucid introduction."--Adam Kirsch, *Barnes Noble*"Moshe Halbertal's Maimonides is a useful guide to the man and his work, with something to offer both novice and scholar. . . . [T]his admirable work invites us to study Moses Maimonides' writings on our own."--Mark Blitz, *Weekly Standard*"Halbertal, a professor of both law and Jewish studies, is equipped to grasp the richness of Maimonides's thought, which reflects a potent blend of rabbinic expertise and philosophical acumen. . . . If Halbertal's book accomplishes nothing else but to inspire this Maimonidean approach to life and religion, then he has done his job well."--James A. Diamond, *Jerusalem Post*"[S]tudying the Andalusian refugee Maimonides will be revealing and this terrific book by the philosopher Moshe Halbertal is a great place to begin."--Richard Marshall, *3ammagazine.com*"This insightful, well-written book offers a fresh perspective on Maimonides. Halbertal offers an excellent introductory overview of Maimonides's life and contributions to Jewish law, philosophy, medicine, and religious consciousness. He also makes clear how Maimonides's personality, psychology, and evolving outlook penetrate his oeuvre. . . . The author offers a window into the self-perception of this greatest of medieval rabbinic thinkers, physicians, legalists, and theologians, and the radical transformations he sought to effect in Judaism."--Choice"[A] valuable and impressive achievement."--Eric Shoag, *Jewish Journal*"[A] brilliant tour de force."--Lawrence Kaplan, *Jewish of Books*"In this excellent study, Moshe Halbertal makes it clear, in keeping with Maimonides, that there is no one way to understand the Jewish tradition."--Jude P. Dougherty, *Mary Elizabeth Tetzlaff*"[A]n unusually comprehensive overview of Maimonides achievements."--Berel Dov Lerner, *Religion Theology*From the Back Cover"In the gorgeous and rugged terrain of Jewish thought, there is no higher mountain to climb than Maimonides, and no more slippery or exhilarating ascent. Halbertal has made it all the way to the top, and his survey of the whole of the Maimonidean landscape is trustworthy and masterful. This is the richest and most intellectually sophisticated book on Maimonides I have ever read."--Leon Wieseltier"In this learned and penetrating work, Halbertal offers us a Maimonides who draws on the dominant Greco-Islamic thought of his time while creating a system of thought that is fully Jewish. He shows us how the early Commentary on the Mishnah links up with the Mishneh Torah and with the Guide of the Perplexed, written at the end of his life, to form an unexpected and radical intellectual unity. Beautifully written, Maimonides brings out both Maimonides's intellectual success and the paradoxical critical approaches to him after his death."--David J. Wasserstein, *Vanderbilt University*"Insightful and learned. Halbertal is perhaps the leading philosopher of Jewish law today. His book on Maimonides, like his other writings, reflects wide erudition and is written clearly and sharply."--Warren Zev Harvey, professor emeritus, *Hebrew University of Jerusalem*"Displaying the marvelous depth and clarity that mark all his work, Halbertal explains in abundant detail the transformations that Maimonides sought to effect in the Jewish world. He provides incisive interpretations of both legal and philosophical writings, yet he is also a biographer, binding together Maimonides's life, self-perception, and intellectual agenda. This is an exceptionally rich book, one that offers fresh perspectives for experts and a highly accessible introduction for general readers."--David Shatz, *Yeshiva University*"An outstanding and thrilling portrait of Maimonides. Halbertal's analytic lucidity and psychological depth are singular, and his talents are abundantly apparent on every page. This is an extraordinary book."--Menachem Lorberbaum, *Tel Aviv University*About the AuthorMoshe Halbertal is the Gruss professor of Law at New York University, professor of Jewish thought and philosophy at the Hebrew University, and professor of law at IDC Herzliya in Israel. His books include *On Sacrifice and Concealment and Revelation: Esotericism in Jewish Thought and Its Philosophical Implications* (both Princeton).