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Judaism

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Our world consists of various religions. Despite that all religions have one same goal: they all teach us to be a good person and this would, in return, improve our lives. Judaism is one of the religions created to make one's life better. It is the religion of Jewish people, which is considered to be the world's oldest religion.¹ According to Torah, around 4,000 years ago, the man named Abraham went up on the mountain and met God. God promised to make him and his descendants God's people and gave them the holy land if they live in such the manner of what God said. Abraham agreed to do so and this marks the origin of Judaism.² Since then, Judaism is the religion of Abraham's descendants or Jewish people. However, The importance of Judaism is not only the fact that it is the world's oldest religion, but it also has an impact on Jewish culture, beliefs, philosophy, and their ways of life. Moreover, it is the derivation of many other cultures and religions.

Unlike Greek and many other religions, Judaism is a monotheistic religion that considered God to be the perfectly purified one and the moral one.³ Religions with many Gods involve many ceremonies to satisfy their Gods because each god has different preferences. Believing in one God makes Jewish people less worried about the religious ceremony and performing ritual to please the God. On the other hand, they tend to purify

¹ Stan Griffin. "Five major world religion." Workersforjesus. 7 Jan 2012
<<http://www.workersforjesus.com/five.htm>>

² Raymond P. Scheindlin. A short history of the Jewish people: From legendary times to modern.

³ Dennis Prager. "Ethical Monotheism." Jewishvirtuallibrary. 10 Jan 2012
<<http://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/jsource/Judaism/mono.html>>

their minds more and their ceremonies are more about learning Bible and Torah. In the past, Judaism is similar to any other religion. They believe that God has superior power and they can punish human. However, the God's messengers later told them that God does not like ceremonies, but God prefer goodness, justice, and morality. Not being involved in ceremonies in Judaism is not considered to be immoral, but committing atrocious acts such as murder and rape is immoral. As doing ceremonies is not important, the power of priests in Jewish temples also decreased.⁴ The teaching of the God's messengers also changed the duties of priests from people who conduct the ceremonies to be the people who teach morality. All of these things are the factors that make Judaism the religion that always stay with Jewish people because they believe that God is not at only one place, but God is in every Jewish people's heart. So, no matter where they go, God will be with them. We can see that Jewish people are scattered all around the world, but they can maintain their Jewish identity and still worship only one God.

The belief of one God also has an impact on the administrative system of Jewish people. Jewish people used to have the monarch system, but their belief about monarch is different from other's belief on monarch. For Jewish people, monarch is considered the leader of people, not the divine of God like Egypt and others. This is because Jewish God cannot divine to be a monarch. Since Jews' monarch was not the divine of God, he could not do whatever he wanted and he held the duty to make people's life peaceful. Furthermore, the Jewish monarch had to be in moral. They were expected to govern the state with fairness and goodness. Their belief about the monarch leads to the origin of the concept of the moral king that we can see nowadays.

⁴ George Robinson. Essential Judaism: A complete guide to beliefs, customs, and rituals. 1953. 619 pages

Because Jewish people can maintain their identity as Jews, Judaism still has an impact on Jewish people until now. The religious belief in Judaism is said to be one of the factors that make Jewish people become so much successful as they are seen today. Jewish population is only about 0.2% of the world population, but Jewish people become one of the most successful people in the world.⁵ Not only they are prosperous, but they also gain a lot of reputation and become the race that does a lot of great contributions to the world. The example of these people is the most well known scientist of all times, Albert Einstein. He was the person who discovered the formula that led to the revolution of science: $E=mc^2$. As we look to the content in Torah and the Jewish religious teaching, we can see that the success of these people do only come from their genetic, but also from their religion; Judaism.⁶ The religious teaching of Judaism does not contain only about religious content, but it also has the concept about Jewish way of life. The content expresses about the ways to become successful. The example of this is the content of the book "From Good to Great" by Jim Collins that discusses about becoming a great leader is also in Torah.⁷

Judaism does not only have an impact on Jews, but it also has an influence to people in other religions. Judaism is the root of two world-famous religions, which are Christianity and Islam.⁸ Christianity is the religion that has many similarities to Judaism. We can say that these two religions are overlapped with each other although they have some differences. Christian people also study Torah, which is the teaching of Judaism

⁵ Wikipedia contributors. "Judaism." Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia. 15 Jan 2012. <<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Judaism>>

⁶ Steven Huberman. "From good to great: how to create Jewish learning communities of excellence." Policyarchive. 21 Jan 2012. <<http://www.policyarchive.org/handle/10207/bitstreams/9858.pdf>>

⁷ Rabbi Levi Brackman. "Why Jews are disproportionately successful." 21 Jan 2012. <<http://www.ynetnews.com/articles/0,7340,L-3592566,00.html>>

⁸ BBC writers. "Judaism at glance." BBC, Religion. 10 Jan 2012. <<http://www.bbc.co.uk/religion/religions/judaism/ata glance/glance.shtml>>

and Hebrew Bible of Judaism is the source of the Christian Old Testament. Christianity also has the same holy religious land as Judaism, which is Jerusalem. Similarly, they also have the same concept of monotheistic religion and have the same God.⁹ Moreover, Jesus, who is considered to be a Jew, has the importance to both Judaism and Christianity. He is the God's messenger in Judaism, but in Christianity, he is God.¹⁰

Islam is another religion that received an influence from Judaism.¹¹ Islam shared the same religious history with Judaism. Judaism is considered to be one part of Islam history. However, since Judaism was founded before Islam and there is no presence of content about Islam in Jewish book, we can conclude that Islam has an influence from Judaism¹². Judaism and Islam also have the same origin in the Middle East and the founder of Islam is also Abraham, which is the same as Judaism. So, both religions are regarded as Abrahamic religion.¹³ In addition, Islam shared the same religious belief and the religious practicing ways with Judaism. However, Judaism does not only have an impact on religious belief of Islam, it also affects Islam on other aspects, such as Islamic philosophy, culture, and political ways. One example of Jewish culture that is similar to Islamic culture is that both Jewish and Islamic men have to be circumcised according to Abrahamic laws.¹⁴

⁹ Samuel Sandman. "Judaism and Christian beginning." 1978. 492 pages.

¹⁰ Wikipedia contributors. "Jesus." Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia. 2 Feb 2012. <<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jesus>>

¹¹ Bernard Lewis. The Jews of Islam. 1984. 227 pages.

¹² "Comparison of statistics and basics." Religious facts, just the fact on religion. 2 Feb 2012. <http://www.religionfacts.com/islam/comparison_charts/islam_judaism_christianity.htm>

¹³ F.E Peters. The children of Abraham: Judaism, Christianity, Islam. 2004. 227 pages.

¹⁴ "Similarities." Lookisrael. 21 Jan 2012 <<http://www.lookisrael.com/files/muslimsqa.php>>

Judaism is the religion originated in Middle East which been practiced by Jewish people.¹⁵ It is the religion that has a tremendous impact to the world from the past until now. It does not only have the importance of being a religion, but it also contributes to mankind in many ways. First, Judaism is the concept contributing to Jewish people and has the influence on Jewish way of life, philosophy, belief, and their political concept. Second, Judaism is the religious root contributed to the two world famous religions, Christianity and Islam. From the aforementioned paragraphs, it is undeniable to conclude that Judaism is the religion that contributes immensely to mankind civilization.

¹⁵ Ian Lacey. "Judaism an overview." Israel and Judaism studies, the education website of the NSW Jewish board of deputies. 8 Jan 2012.
< <http://www.ijs.org.au/Judaism-an-Introductory-Overview/default.aspx>>