The Rambam: A Life of Torah and Medicine



The Rambam,	A Brief Biography by Peter Guralnick			
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Moses Maimonides, known as the Rambam, was a renowned Jewish philosopher, physician, and astronomer who lived in the 12th century. His writings have had a profound impact on Jewish thought and practice, and he is considered one of the most important figures in the history of medicine.

Early Life and Education

Moses Maimonides was born in Cordoba, Spain, in 1135. His father, Maimon, was a respected Jewish scholar, and his mother, Rachel, was a woman of great piety. Maimonides received a traditional Jewish education, studying the Torah, Talmud, and other Jewish texts. He also studied medicine, philosophy, and astronomy at the University of Cordoba.

Exile from Spain

In 1148, the Almohads, a fanatical Muslim sect, conquered Cordoba. The Almohads forced the Jews to convert to Islam or face death. Maimonides' family chose to convert to Islam outwardly, but they continued to practice Judaism in secret.

In 1160, after the Almohads discovered that Maimonides was secretly practicing Judaism, they ordered his execution. Maimonides and his family fled Cordoba and wandered for several years before settling in Fez, Morocco.

Career in Fez

In Fez, Maimonides resumed his medical practice and began writing his magnum opus, the Mishneh Torah. The Mishneh Torah is a comprehensive code of Jewish law that summarizes the entire Talmud. It is one of the most important works of Jewish literature and has been studied by Jewish scholars for centuries.

Maimonides also wrote several other important works, including the Guide for the Perplexed. The Guide for the Perplexed is a philosophical work that attempts to reconcile the teachings of the Torah with the principles of Aristotelian philosophy.

Exile from Fez

In 1195, the Almohads conquered Fez. Maimonides and his family were once again forced to flee. They traveled to Cairo, Egypt, where they were welcomed by the Jewish community.

Career in Cairo

In Cairo, Maimonides was appointed personal physician to the vizier, Al-Qadi al-Fadil. He also served as the head of the Jewish community in Cairo.

Maimonides continued to write and teach in Cairo. He wrote several important medical works, including the Treatise on Poisons and the Treatise on Asthma. He also wrote a number of responsa, which are answers to questions on Jewish law.

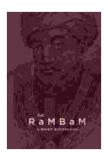
Death and Legacy

Moses Maimonides died in Cairo in 1204. He was buried in Tiberias, Israel. His tomb is a popular pilgrimage site for Jews from all over the world.

Maimonides was one of the most important figures in Jewish history. His writings have had a profound impact on Jewish thought and practice, and he is considered one of the greatest physicians of all time.

Additional Resources

* Moses Maimonides * Moses Maimonides * Moses Maimonides

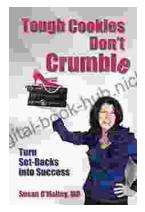


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