# The Talmub 塔木德 启蒙书

(精装彩色插图版)



The Talmud

# 塔木德

启蒙书

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# 编译者前言

1955 年, 爱因斯坦临终之前, 有人问他:"如果能重新生活的话, 你会选择什么?" 爱因斯坦没有丝毫犹豫地回答道:"研究《塔木德》!"

在过去的 1500 年里,世界各地的犹太人都投身到《塔木德》的研究中。 除了《圣经》以外,没有其他书像《塔木德》那样描绘犹太人民,描绘他 们的价值观和世界观。

一代又一代的人为它的复杂性感到欣喜,集中精力地深入探讨了它的错综复杂,用充满了爱和专注的热忱投入到这一蕴含超凡智慧的文本中。他们在无数杰出的拉比,如希勒尔和沙迈,阿贝和拉瓦,耶胡达和梅厄的辩论中受到了鼓舞和启示,激发了全体犹太人的集体想象,并帮助他们在整个流亡时代保留了犹太民族信仰和传统的完整性。

正如拉比伊斯梅尔(Rabbi Ismael)所说:"《塔木德》的价值高于其他一切律法,学习和研究《塔木德》甚至比研究摩西律法本身更重要。

拉比梅纳赫姆在评论《托拉》时说:"《塔木德》中的辩论和决断就是活生生的上帝话语。甚至耶和华自己也会在天上出现了麻烦事的时候,向地面上的拉比们了解他们有什么观点。

《塔木德》究竟是一部什么样的著作?事实上,对它下定义是极其困难的。正如拉比阿丁·斯坦因萨尔茨 (Rabbi Adin Steinsaltz) 在他的序言中所阐明的那样:"因为它是一部独特的作品,在世界上几乎找不到任何一部与它类似的作品。从内容到风格,每一个定义都是不完整的,相互对立的。由于它本身充满了无数矛盾的修辞和自相矛盾的悖论,因此只能说,它是

# 塔木徳启蒙书

一部神圣的、具有知性主义的或理性主义 (intellectualism) 的作品。

没有别的作品与《塔木德》相同,因为它本身不是只有一种观点,还有两个或三个的角度和观点,而且是多层面的结构,而每一种观点、角度、层面又都截然不同,相互抗辩,相互矛盾,组成了一个复杂的综合体系。

《塔木德》里的"米启拉"篇说:"耶和华是如此尊重《塔木德》,他自己也始终对它进行研究。"<sup>①</sup>

《塔木德》为什么如此重要?《塔木德》的最主要特征就是对于《圣经》的大量评论。所谓的评论,不仅是对于古老的《圣经》文本的新的论述,也是一个原创性的创造。或者说,是在一个新时代里以新的方式表达对于新的真理的发现。

《塔木德》主要关注的是律法,因为在犹太人看来《圣经》中最重要的元素就是律法。举例来说:长期以来,许多人认为犹太教是一种冷酷的宗教,它的律法是一种严厉无情的律法。这是对犹太教及其律法不公正的理解。爱与仁慈一直存在于犹太教的起始。例如,当耶稣基督说:"爱你的邻人如同爱你自己。"实际上这句话是在引用《托拉》中的律法:"要爱人如己。" ②而且这一观点在《利未记》中被反复强调:"和你们同居的外人,你们要看他如本地人一样,并要爱他如己。" ③但是它的律法来源却一直被忽略。

《塔木德》的《密西拿》中有许多篇幅,包括 Pirkei Avot, Berakoth 等都在教导人们说:"宇宙建立在三件事物上,《托拉》,敬奉上帝,仁爱。"事实上,这句话已经变成了犹太教会堂流行的颂歌——"在这三件事上"。与此同时,《密西拿》还将它作为诚命之一,而且履行仁爱的责任并没有最低的限度。④

① 《巴比伦塔木德》: Tract Mechilla

② 《利未记》19:18

③ 《利未记》19:34

Chagigah 7a

《塔木德》还含有丰富的宗教、道德、社会制度、历史、民间传说和科学等领域的大量知识,因此它不仅是对于《圣经》的补充,也是一千多年来犹太人智慧、信仰和社会成果的总和。

长期以来,由于宗教原因,在欧洲处于天主教的统治时期,《塔木德》遭受了巨大的攻击和迫害,受到了审判,被焚烧,甚至被列为禁书。因此《塔木德》中的思想和观点一直处于被封杀的状态,在西方思想界里找不到它的影子,没有丝毫地位。直到1950年前后,才出现了较为完整的《塔木德》英文版。因此,在某种意义上来说,不仅犹太人本身,即使大多数非犹太人,更不用说中国人,对《塔木德》的研究都处在起步的阶段。

由于《塔木德》的内容过于庞大和复杂,本书以简洁的方式对它的主要内容进行了分类和概括,提供了几个主要的线索,以便读者能循着这些线索对《塔木德》的精神和主旨有一个基本的理解。包括它的神圣观,人类的创造和生命的价值,法律的道德精神和神圣意义,《塔木德》特有的智慧和幽默,妇女的历史地位和作用,商业的道德原则,生活的洁净与健康等。

本书的最后部分还从《塔木德》中选编了许多《圣经》中的英雄人物如摩西、约瑟的传奇事迹,以及民间故事、谚语、格言、寓言、诗歌、逸事等内容,方便读者对《塔木德》有一个更生动全面的认识。

《塔木德》中的那些代表拉比具有高度的智慧和雄辩精神,他们致力于让古老的传统在致命的生存危险中获得再生,他们的语言给人快乐,他们的知识令人敬畏。但是对于每一位初次接触《塔木德》的读者来说,学习《塔木德》是一件困难的事,因为人们会发现其中的逻辑复杂,令人费解,有时候甚至会对那些似乎没有逻辑性的争论感到沮丧。学习《塔木德》需要花费惊人的精力和时间,常常投入与收获不成正比。于是,很多读者对此望而生畏。

尽管如此, 学习《塔木德》是犹太人成功的秘密吗? 这个问题仍是人们关注的基本焦点, 也是人们思考得最多的问题。对此, 拉比阿丁·斯坦

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因萨尔茨,一位被《时代》周刊誉为"千年一遇的学者",毕生致力于将《塔木德》与犹太人结合在一起的哲学家和犹太精神的领导者这样回答这个问题:

"如果《托拉》是犹太教的基石,那么《塔木德》就是它的核心支柱,它从这一基石上起飞,支撑着整个犹太精神和智力的大厦。在许多方面,《塔木德》都是犹太文化中最重要的一本书,是整个创造力的脊梁和民族的生命。在犹太人生活的理论和实践中,没有其他任何一部作品的影响力能与它媲美,它塑造了民族精神的内涵,并成为这一精神的指南。" ①

为什么犹太人成功的秘密在于学习《塔木德》呢?如今,犹太人在所有领域里几乎都有显著的成就,已经无人提出异议。但是,人们可能要探究这究竟是什么原因:这个民族在历史上一直受到排挤和憎恨,为什么还能坚持追求卓越和超脱?对于这一问题,拉比亚伯拉罕·赫希维茨认为:

"犹太人的成功,得益于对《塔木德》的学习和研究。犹太人的全方位的才能和成就是众所周知的。凡是人类所关注和努力的领域,他们几乎都在其中脱颖而出。犹太人的早熟和独创性标志着他们惊人的创造力和对知识的杰出贡献。毫无疑问,在他们的创造力中有一个极其重要的因素,那就是长期以来全神贯注和义无反顾地投入到对《塔木德》和《哈卡拉》(即《塔木德经》)的学习和研究中,在早年就开始刻苦钻研《塔木德》,具有天然的警觉性,敏锐的洞察力,机智的反应力,培养出衡量局势和意见的能力。犹太人鼓励辩论和个人研究,奖励主动性,赞美出众的才华。"

① From: The Essential Talmud, p.3



#### **Foreward**

Before his death in 1955, Einstein was asked: "If you could re-live it, what would you choose?" Einstein replied without the slightest hesitation: "Study the Talmud!"

For the past 1500 years, Jews around the world have devoted themselves to the study of Talmud. More than any other book besides the Bible, the Talmud has shaped the Jewish people, its values and world—view.

Generation after generation has rejoiced in its intricacies and delved into its complexities, poring over the text with an extraordinary combination of love and purpose. The myriad and outstanding debates between Hillel and Shamai, Abbaye and Rava, and Rabbi Yehuda and Rabbi Meir fired Jewish people's collective imagination and helped to preserve the integrity of Jewish tradition throughout the exile.

Just as Rabbi Ismael said: "The teachings of the Talmud stand above all other laws. They are more important than the laws of Moses."

In his commentary on Fifth Book Rabbi Menachem said: ""The decisions of the Talmud are the words of the living God. Jehovah Himself asks the opinion of the earthly rabbis when there are difficult affairs in heaven."

In Tract Mechilla of Babylonian Talmud, it was said: "Jehovah Himself studies the Talmud standing, he has such respect for that book."

What is really the Talmud? As a matter of fact it is extremely hard to define.

Just as Steinsaltz described in the "Preface to The Essential Talmud":

"The Talmud is a very hard book to define. From content to



style, every definition is incomplete or contradictory. The Talmud is completely unique – a book that has no parallel anywhere. By way of an oxymoron and paradox, the Talmud may be called a book of holy intellectualism. Because there is nothing quite like the Talmud, it is helpful to have not just one perspective, but two or three, so that one can have a sense of the multifaceted and often contradictory sides of this large, very complex work. "

Why the Talmud was so significant and important? The characterization of the Talmud as a commentary on the Bible, As the "commentary", in its broadest sense, is more than a new exposition of an old document. It is also an original new creation, new means in new way and in new to express their discoveries of new truth.

The Talmud is primarily concerned with law, because the Jews looked upon the legislation in the Bible as its most important element. For an example, many people think of Judaism as the religion of cold, harsh laws, to be contrasted with Christianity, the religion of love and brotherhood. This is an unfair characterization of both Judaism and Jewish law. Love and kindness have been a part of Judaism from the very beginning. When Jesus said, "love thy neighbor as thyself," he was merely quoting Torah, and he was quoting the book that is most commonly dismissed as a source of harsh laws: Leviticus 19:18. The point is repeated in Leviticus 19:34: love (the stranger) as thyself. (Love and Brotherhood in Jewish Sources.)

Books in the Talmud including Pirkei Avot, Berakoth of the Mishnah, teaches that the universe depends on three things: on Torah (law), on avodah (service to G-d), and on g'milut chasadim (usually translated as "acts of lovingkindness") (Avot 1:2), perhaps drawing from Psalm 89:3, "the universe is built on kindness" (more commonly translated as "forever is mercy built"). In fact,



this quote has become a popular song in synagogues: Al Shlosha D'varim (On Three Things). The Mishnah also describes g'milut chasadim as one of the few mitzvot (commandments) for which there is no minimum amount sufficient to satisfy your obligation. (Pe'ah 1:1; reiterated in Talmud Chagigah 7a).

Talmud is also rich in many copious discussions in the field of religion, ethics, social institutions, history, folk—lore and science. Thus it is not only a supplement to the Bible, and is also a summation of a thousand years of intellectual, religious and social achievements of the Jewish people.

Because of religious reasons, during a absolutely long time, under the reign of the Catholic Church in Europe, the Talmud suffered huge attacks and persecutions, have been tried, burned, banned, the thoughts and ideas in Talmud has been forced—out in the Western intellectual circles, without the slightest position. Only till about 1950s there was the emergence of a more complete "Talmud" in English. As to study the Talmud, not only modern Jewish people themselves but also most non—Jewish people, let along the Chinese, are really on the initial stage.

As the "Talmud" contains tremendous and complex contents, this book "The Enlightment of Talmud" try to translate and compile it in a concise way, classified and summarized its main contents into several major clue, to help readers following these clues to have a basic understanding of the subjects; The first is the sacred concept of Talmud about Law and Ethics in theological significance; value of creation and human life; the Law of moral and spiritual and sacred significance, Tamu Gaudet moral principles inherent wisdom and humor, history, status and role of women in business, clean and healthy living.

The last chapter of this book is a selection from the Talmud about many biblical heroes such as Moses, Joseph, David, Solomon and other legendary stories, The Talmud

folk tales, proverbs, proverbs, fables, poems, anecdotes, etc, It may be interesting for readers to learn the Talmud in some visual image forms.

The people represented in Talmud were intelligent, articulate, and dedicated to the remarkable project of helping an ancient tradition survive mortal danger. The arguments stimulate, their language gives pleasure, the immensity of their achievement provokes awe.

Beginners especially may find Talmud study a difficult task. Many people are frustrated by the Talmud's playful or even illogical arguments, curious and fantastic stories, and far-fetched interpretations. Talmud study requires a tremendous investment of time and effort, and the payoff from struggling through its meandering dialectics is not always obvious.

No matter however, Is Talmud study the secret to Jewish success? It is the primary focus of study and meditation. Here is how Adin Steinsaltz, a teacher, philosopher, social critic, and spiritual mentor, who has been hailed by Time magazine as a "once-in-a-millennium scholar". He has devoted his life to making the Talmud accessible to all Jews puts it:

"If the Bible is the cornerstone of Judaism, then the Talmud is the central pillar, soaring up from the foundations and supporting the entire spiritual and intellectual edifice. In many ways the Talmud is the most important book in Jewish culture, the backbone of creativity and of national life. No other work has had a comparable influence on the theory and practice of Jewish life, shaping spiritual content and serving as a guide to conduct."

Why Is Talmud study the secret to Jewish success? Right now, few will dispute the remarkable achievement of Jewish people in virtually all walks life. But we might well ask how it is that a people who have been hounded and harassed

① The Essential Talmud, p.3

Foreward

throughout history can excel in so many pursuits.

Rabbi Abraham Hirsch Rabinowitz believes that much of Jewish success is related to the benefits of Talmud study:

"The versatility and achievement of the Jewish mind is proverbial. There is hardly a field of human contemplation and endeavor in which Jews have failed to excel. Precocity and originality have usually marked the contribution of Jews to knowledge, as also a striking ability to improvise. Of the main factors that together created the Jewish mind, there can be little doubt that the contributon of the age—long preoccupation of the Jew with Talmud and halachah is formidable. The study of Talmud, undertaken at an early age and pursued assiduously, nurtured alertness, discernment, and acumen and cultured the ability to weigh situations and opinions. It encouraged debate and individual research, rewarded initiative, and lauded brilliance."

① The Study of Talmud, Jason Aronson p.13

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