

Published in Association of Jewish Libraries Reviews, November/December, 2017, p. 23.

Sacks, Elias. *Moses Mendelssohn's Living Script: Philosophy, Practice, History, Judaism*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2017. 316 pp. \$60.00. (9780253023742). Also available as an eBook.

Moses Mendelssohn (1729-1786) was one of the principal progenitors of Jewish Enlightenment thought. Dr. Sacks (University of Colorado) examines and tries to explicate three of the issues that Mendelssohn confronted, taking into account the historical context and using both his Hebrew and German writings. First is Mendelssohn's claim that Judaism was open to philosophical developments (without falling prey to passing trends) because Jewish practice encourages reflection upon the truths of God's existence and providence and the immortality of the soul while avoiding the rigidity of creeds that might stultify philosophical progress. Secondly, Dr. Sacks considers Mendelssohn's claim that Judaism works for the wellbeing of the nations in which Jews find themselves. According to Mendelssohn, Jews can do this through the self-perfection that Judaism encourages thus inclining them to distinguish what is good and beneficial from what is bad and harmful. In other words, Judaism encourages an active, intelligent, and benevolent civic engagement. Thirdly, the book examines Mendelssohn's defense of religious authority by his arguing for the truth of the revelation at Sinai and, against a certain type of Biblical criticism, for the reliability of the received Masoretic text of the Bible as well as the reliability of rabbinical exegeses of the Bible. This is an interesting excursion into Jewish intellectual history marred a bit by a certain repetitiveness.

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