



World Religions Part 2: Judaism

1. Judaism: a Religion or an Ethnicity?
2. Summary History of the Jews
 - a. God's Covenant with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob/Israel
 - b. God's Covenant with Israel through Moses
 - c. Conquest and Kingdom: Israel in the Land
 - d. Exile and (partial) Restoration
 - e. Destruction of the Jewish Temple and State (AD 66–74, 132-35)
 - f. Rabbinic Judaism
 - g. European Judaism and Jewish-Christian Relations
 - h. The Holocaust
 - i. The Zionist Movement (from 1890s)
 - j. The Modern State of Israel (1948)
3. Jewish Beliefs and Practice
 - a. Monotheism: One True Creator God — YHWH
 - b. Israel as God's Chosen People
 - c. The Covenant & the Law (Torah)
 - Sabbath Observance
 - Circumcision
 - Dietary Laws
 - Purity Laws



d. Temple and Sacrifice

e. The Synagogue

- Worship Center
- School
- Courthouse
- Community Meeting place

f. Jewish Holy Days and Celebrations

Weekly Sabbath

Pilgrim Festivals

- Passover (*Pesach*): Freedom from Slavery in Egypt
- Pentecost (*Shavuot*): Celebrating the Law at Mt.Sinai
- Tabernacles (*Sukkot*): Commemorates the Wilderness Period

Other Holy Days

- *Rosh Hashanah*: New Year's Day
- *Yom Kippur*: Day of Atonement
- *Purim*: Celebrating Esther and the victory of the Persian Jews
- *Hanukkah*: Celebrating the Victory of the Maccabees

g. The Messiah and the Final Judgement

4. Groups within Judaism Today

a. Orthodox Judaism

b. Conservative Judaism

c. Reformed (secular) Judaism

d. Messianic Judaism





Study/Discussion Questions:

1. Can you name some of the key points in Israel's history, starting with God's call of Abraham?
2. What was unique about the nation Israel? What does it mean that God made a "covenant" with Israel? What were the expectations and consequences for keeping or not keeping the covenant?
3. What is "Rabbinic Judaism" and how does this relate to the destruction of the Temple and the role of the Law (Torah) in Israel?
4. What were the general tendencies in the relationships of Jews and Christians in Europe?
5. What is Zionism and how does this relate to the modern State of Israel?
6. What is the most important belief in Judaism?
7. What role does the Law play in Judaism? What role did the temple and the priesthood play?
8. Name some of the Jewish Holy Days and what they celebrate?
9. What are the main features of the following: Orthodox Judaism; Conservative Judaism; Reformed Judaism; Messianic Judaism?

