

World Religions- Judaism

What do you know about Judaism? Modern Judaism?

- Distinction between Jewish people and those who practice Judaism
- 12.8 million Jewish people worldwide (4.1 in Israel, 5.8 in USA)
- While based on OT teachings, modern Judaism really began in 200 BC and was more finalized after the destruction of the temple in 70 AD
- Based on the practices of Rabbis rather than creeds or Laws
- A sister, rather than a mother, to Christianity, since both came from the same OT background

Development

- Came from the religious practices of the Pharisees and then rabbis once the temple was destroyed.
- Until 1700s, there were only "Orthodox Jews"
- Since then 3 major branches have formed which most, if not all, practicing Jews fall under
- Three branches are *Orthodox*, *Reform*, and *Conservative*
 - Orthodox* would be the most conservative, *Reform* (1700s in Germany) on the other end, and *Conservative* (1800s in Germany) in the middle
- Orthodox is like Roman Catholicism or Greek Orthodox, very heavy emphasis on tradition
- Reform is closer to Unitarian, emphasizing humanism and bettering ourselves
- Conservative is closer to liberal protestantism, emphasizing practice and lifestyle over doctrine.
- All of Judaism is based on *deed not creed*. There aren't a central list of beliefs or even of established practices. You don't even have to believe in God to be Jewish. You might just practice a Jewish lifestyle of being Kosher and going to synagogue.
- If you are agnostic or atheistic, probably closer to the reform side
- Belief in God or a higher power usually puts you on the orthodox/conservative side

The Three Branches of Judaism

CATEGORY	ORTHODOX	CONSERVATIVE	REFORM
HISTORY	Orthodoxy dates back to the days of the Talmud (second to fifth centuries A.D.). It was the only form of Jewish practice prior to the eighteenth century and the emergence of Reform Judaism. Orthodoxy today seeks to preserve classical or traditional Judaism.	Conservative Judaism is an American movement with roots in nineteenth century Germany. It arose as a reaction to what some viewed as the extreme assimilationist tendencies of Reform Judaism. It tried to be a middle ground, attempting to maintain basic traditions while adapting to modern life.	Reform Judaism emerged following the emancipation from ghetto life in the late eighteenth century. It sought to modernize Judaism and thus stem the tide of assimilation threatening German Jewry. It was thought that Jewish identity could be best maintained by modernization, but others saw this as in fact contributing to assimilation and the loss of Jewish identity.
OTHER TERMS	Traditional or Torah Judaism	Historical Judaism	Liberal or Progressive Judaism
U.S. MEMBERSHIP*	6% of all American Jews	35% of all American Jews	38% of all American Jews

*(Source: 1992 *American Jewish Yearbook*)

VIEW OF SCRIPTURE	Torah, meaning essentially the teaching of the Five Books of Moses, is truth. A person must have faith in its essential, revealed character. A true Jew believes in revelation and the divine origin of the oral and written Torah. "Oral Torah" refers to various interpretations of the written Torah believed to have been given to Moses along with the written Torah. The Torah is accorded a higher place than the rest of the Hebrew Bible.	The Bible, both the Torah and the other books, is the word of God <i>and</i> man. It is not inspired in the traditional sense, but rather dynamically inspired. Revelation is an ongoing process.	The Bible is a human document preserving the history, culture, legends and hopes of a people. It is valuable for deriving moral and ethical insights. Revelation is an ongoing process.
VIEW OF GOD	God is spirit rather than form. He is a personal God—omnipotent, omniscient, omnipresent, eternal, and compassionate.	The concept of God is nondogmatic and flexible. There is less atheism in Conservative Judaism than in Reform, but most often God is considered impersonal and ineffable.	Reform Judaism allows a varied interpretation of the "God concept" with wide latitude for naturalists, mystics, supernaturalists, or religious humanists. It holds that "the truth is that we do not know the truth."
VIEW OF HUMAN-KIND	Humanity is morally neutral, with a good and an evil inclination. He or she can overcome his or her evil bent and be perfected by his or her own efforts in observance of the Law.	This group tends toward the Reform view, though it is not as likely to espouse humanism. Perfectibility can come through enlightenment. Humanity is "in partnership" with God.	Humanity's nature is basically good. Through education, encouragement, and evolution he or she can actualize the potential already existing within him or her.
VIEW OF THE TRADITION OF THE LAW	The Law is the basis of Judaism. It is authoritative and gives structure and meaning to life. The life of total dedication to <i>Halakhah</i> (body of Jewish law) leads to a nearness to God.	Adaptation to contemporary situations is inevitable. The demands of morality are absolute; the specific laws are relative.	The law is an evolving, ever-dynamic religious code that adapts to every age. It is maintained that if religious observances clash with the just demands of civilized society they must be dropped.
VIEW OF SIN	Orthodox Jews do not believe in "original sin." Rather one commits sin by breaking the commandments of the Law.	Conservative Jews do not believe in "original sin." The individual can sin in moral or social actions.	Reform Jews do not believe in "original sin." Sin is interpreted as the ills of society. Humanity is sometimes held to have a "divine spark" within.

VIEW OF SALVATION	Repentance (belief in God's mercy), prayer, and obedience to the Law are necessary for a proper relationship with God. "Salvation" is not considered to be a Jewish concept, inasmuch as Jewish people presume a standing with God.	Conservative Jews tend toward the Reform view, but include the necessity of maintaining Jewish identity.	"Salvation" is obtained through the betterment of self and society. It is social improvement.
VIEW OF THE MESSIAH	The Messiah is a human being who is not divine. He will restore the Jewish kingdom and extend his righteous rule over the earth. He will execute judgment and right all wrongs.	Conservative Jews hold much the same view as the Reform.	Instead of belief in Messiah as a person or divine being, Reform Jews favor the concept of a Utopian age toward which humankind is progressing, sometimes called the "Messianic age."
VIEW OF LIFE AFTER DEATH	There will be a physical resurrection. The righteous will exist forever with God in the "World to Come." The unrighteous will suffer, but disagreement exists over their ultimate destiny.	Conservative Jews tend toward the Reform view, but are less influenced by nontraditional ideas such as Eastern mysticism.	Generally, Reform Judaism has no concept of personal life after death. It is said that a person lives on in the accomplishments or in the minds of others. Some are influenced by Eastern mystical thought, where souls merge into one great impersonal life force.
DISTINCTIVES IN SYNAGOGUE WORSHIP	The synagogue is a house of prayer as well as study; social aspects are incidental. All prayers are recited in Hebrew. Men and women sit separately. The officiants face the same direction as the congregants.	The synagogue is viewed as the basic institution of Jewish life. Alterations listed under Reform are found to a lesser degree in Conservative worship.	The synagogue is known as a "Temple." The service has been modernized and abbreviated. English, as well as Hebrew, is used. Men and women sit together. Reform temples use choirs and organs in their worship services.

Holiday Cycle

5. Purim (From Esther) 3/7
6. Passover (4/6-4/14) with seder dinner
1. Rosh ha-Shanah (Happy New Year!) Sept. or October (9-16)
2. Yom Kippur (Day of Atonement) 10 days after new year (9-25)
3. Sukkot (Booths) 5 days after Yom Kippur 9/30-10/7
4. Chanukah (Festival of Lights) 12/8-12/16

Life Cycle

- 8 days- Circumcision
- 13 Years- Bar/Bat Mitzvah
- Weddings w/ broken glass under a *chuppah*
- Death has 7 days of mourning afterwards

Daily Lifestyle

- Sabbath (sundown on Friday until sundown Saturday)
 - No work, lighting fire, cooking
- Phylacteries (tefillin)
- Mezuzah
- Kosher laws

Sharing the Gospel

- Christianity is for the Gentiles
- Believing in Jesus means they can't be Jewish anymore
 - Jewishness is a way of life, not just a belief
- Jews have a presumed standing with God
- Avoid generalizing comments (i.e. you Jews, the Jews rather than the Jewish people
 - "How do Jewish people observe passover?" rather than "What do Jews do at Passover?"
- Use the name of Jesus, not as offensive as it used to be.
- Don't say missionaries, as it speaks of rescuing primitives
- Avoid Christian jargon like "born again", "saved", etc.
- Start with your friends that are Jewish
- Try to move to Spiritual topics, especially around the Jewish holidays

- Use a Jewish frame of reference to start with (Last Supper of Christ a good starting place)
- Be clear about the foundations- we are sinners, only saved by someone outside of ourselves
- Point to Christ as the fulfillment of the Messianic passages (use chart)
- Don't assume all Jewish people know their OT

Selected Messianic Prophecies Fulfilled in Jesus

PROPHECY	FULFILLMENT
The Messiah will be from the seed of Abraham (Genesis 18:18); Isaac (21:12); Jacob (Numbers 24:17, 19); Judah (Genesis 49:10); Jesse (Isaiah 11:1-2, 10); David (Jeremiah 23:5-6).	"Jesus . . . the son of David, the son of Jesse, . . . the son of Judah, the son of Jacob, the son of Isaac, the son of Abraham (Luke 3:31-33).
Born in Bethlehem (Micah 5:2; also John 7:42).	"So Joseph also went up from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to Bethlehem the town of David" (Luke 2:4).
"He was despised and rejected by men" (Isaiah 53:3).	"Those who passed by [the Cross] hurled insults at him . . ." (Matthew 27:39-44).
"A man of sorrows" (Isaiah 53:3).	"Then [Jesus] said to them, 'My soul is overwhelmed with sorrow to the point of death'" (Matthew 26:38).
"Familiar with suffering" (Isaiah 53:3).	"He then began to teach them that the Son of Man must suffer many things" (Mark 8:31; also Luke 24:26).

<p>"Be strong, do not fear; your God will come. . . . Then will the eyes of the blind be opened and the ears of the deaf unstopped. Then will the lame leap like a deer, and the mute tongue shout for joy" (Isaiah 35:4-6); "the LORD has anointed me to preach good news to the poor" (Isaiah 61:1).</p>	<p>"Go back and report to John what you hear and see: The blind receive sight, the lame walk, those who have leprosy are cured, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, and the good news is preached to the poor" (Matthew 11:4-5; also Luke 4:18).</p>
<p>"Surely he took up our infirmities and carried our sorrows" (Isaiah 53:4).</p>	<p>"[Jesus] drove out the spirits with a word and healed all the sick" (Matthew 8:16-17).</p>
<p>"They must not . . . break any of [the Passover lamb's] bones" (Numbers 9:12); "He was pierced" (Isaiah 53:5); "They have pierced my hands and feet" (Psalm 22:16; also Zechariah 12:10).</p>	<p>"But when they came to Jesus and found that he was already dead, they did not break his legs. Instead, one of the soldiers pierced Jesus' side with a spear" (John 19:33-37).</p>
<p>"But he was pierced <i>for</i> our transgressions, he was crushed <i>for</i> our iniquities . . . the LORD has laid on him the iniquity of us all" (Isaiah 53:5-6).</p>	<p>"The Son of Man [came] to give his life as a ransom <i>for</i> many" (Matthew 20:28); "God made him who had no sin to be sin <i>for</i> us (2 Corinthians 5:21; also John 11:49-51; 1 Corinthians 15:3).</p>
<p>"He was oppressed and afflicted, yet he did not open his mouth . . . as a sheep before her shearers is silent, so he did not open his mouth" (Isaiah 53:7).</p>	<p>"But Jesus remained silent" (Matthew 26:63); "When he was accused by the chief priests and the elders, he gave no answer" (Matthew 27:12).</p>
<p>"They divide my garments among them and cast lots for my clothing" (Psalm 22:18).</p>	<p>"[Jesus'] garment was seamless, woven in one piece. . . . 'Let's decide by lot who will get it'" (John 19:23-24).</p>
<p>"He had done no violence, nor was any deceit in his mouth" (Isaiah 53:9).</p>	<p>Judas: "'I have sinned' he said, 'for I have betrayed innocent blood'" (Matthew 27:4; also Luke 23:41; 2 Corinthians 5:21).</p>
<p>He "was numbered with the transgressors" (Isaiah 53:12).</p>	<p>"Two robbers were crucified with him" (Matthew 27:38; also Luke 22:37).</p>
<p>"He was assigned a grave . . . with the rich in his death" (Isaiah 53:9).</p>	<p>"There came a rich man from Arimathea, named Joseph. . . . Joseph took the body . . . and placed it in his own new tomb" (Matthew 27:57-60).</p>
<p>"For he made intercession for the transgressors" (Isaiah 53:12).</p>	<p>"Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they are doing" (Luke 23:34).</p>
<p>"You will not abandon me to the grave, nor will you let your Holy One see decay" (Psalm 16:10); "Though the LORD makes his life a guilt offering, he will see his offspring and prolong his days. . . ." (Isaiah 53:10-11).</p>	<p>"Why do you look for the living among the dead? He is not here; he has risen!" (Luke 24:5-6; also Acts 2:31-32).</p>
<p>"The stone the builders rejected has become the capstone" (Psalm 118:22; Isaiah 8:14)</p>	<p>"But when the tenants saw the son, they said to each other, 'This is the heir. Come, let's kill him. . . .'" (Matthew 21:28-42).</p>

(see Rosen, 1976, 58-60, and McDowell, ch. 9).

Common Objections

-Trinity

-No proof that Jesus is the Messiah... what kind of proof do they need?

-No peace on earth... prophesied peace was peace with God, then each other

-Persecution from Christians throughout history... didn't change belief in God

-NT is anti-semitic... so was the OT in the prophets. Bible is anti-sin