

Vocabulary

Passover/Pesach – Jewish Festival

Shabbat – Weekly ceremony

Synagogue – Holy building of worship

Bar/Bat Mitzvah – Jewish celebration of boy or girl coming of age.

Kosher – law about food

Torah – Holy text

Rabbi – leader of synagogue

Holocaust – Persecution of the Jews by Nazis during World War II.

Mezuzah – A container for a prayer placed on the front door of Jewish houses.

Yad – pointer

Menorah – A special candle holder.

Main Beliefs

Jews believe in one God who is a spirit and never been human. They believe that the Torah is the word of God written down by Moses and has rules and laws that should be followed.

Passover Festival

At Passover (in March or April) Jewish people remember how God brought the Jewish slaves out of Egypt led by Moses (known as the Exodus).

For *Persach* (the Jewish word for Passover) a special meal is prepared to remind Jews of the good and bad times of the past. The *Seder* plate includes hard-boiled egg, parsley, boiled potato, lettuce, horseradish and chopped apples and walnuts.

Hannukah Festival

Hannukah (also written Chanukah) takes place in December and is the Jewish festival of lights. At Hannukah Jewish people light candles and exchange presents and children play a game with a little spinning top called a dreidel. At Hannukah, foods cooked in oil like *latkes* (potato pancakes made from potato, egg and onion) and *sufganiot* (jam doughnuts) are eaten.



Star of David is a common Jewish symbol. The six-pointed star, has been used as a Jewish symbol since the Middle Ages.



A yad is a pointer used with the Torah to keep the scroll clean.



Jewish synagogue

Places of Worship:

- The Temple.
- At home.



Torah scroll

Other Judaism facts:

Holocaust

Each year, Jews the world over hold ceremonies to remember the six million Jews who were killed by the Nazis during the Second World War. Many Jewish families and towns where Jewish people lived were destroyed. [Anne Frank](#), one of the Jewish people murdered by the Nazis, remains very well known today and her diary of her experience has been read by thousands of people.

In Jewish homes you might find a **mezuzah** on the doorpost. It is a little case containing a tiny scroll with writing from the bible. It is called the Shema and is written in Hebrew. It reminds Jewish people to love God and live by his rules. When they come through the door, Jewish people kiss the mezuzah.

Judaism

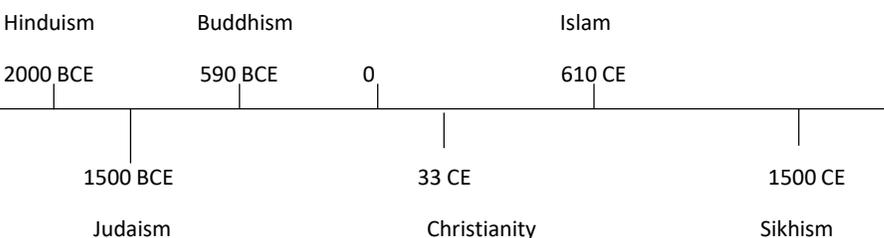
Judaism is one of the six main world religions.

Jews believe in one God.

Sacred Text: The Torah which written in Hebrew and given to the Jews by Moses.

A yad (a pointer) is used to touch the text on the scrolls to keep it clean.

Timeline of Judaism compared to other religions



When Judaism Began

Jewish history begins with the covenant (agreement) established between God and Abraham around 1812 BC (over **3,800** years ago), during the Bronze Age, in the Middle East.

Moses, is also an important figure as he gave the Jews the Torah around 1250 B.C. The Torah contains the laws of God.

Rules and Laws

Jews must follow the tradition of the Shabbat ceremony every week. They have special dietary laws about eating Kosher food.

They follow the Ten Commandments given to Moses by God.



The Ten Commandments



A Menorah is a candelabrum with typically 8 branches and is linked to the Hanukkah story.

Main Festivals

Hanukkah, Passover, Yom Kippur, Sukkot, Rosh Hashanah

Where Judaism Began: Isreal

Map of the world showing Isreal



Worship and prayer

Jews are supposed to **pray** three times a day; morning, afternoon, and evening. The **Jewish prayer** book (it's called a siddur) has special services set down for this.

Praying regularly enables a person to get better at building their relationship with God. After all, most things get better with practice.

Kippah – cap worn by men in the synagogue.
Tallit – shawl worn by devout Jews whilst praying.

Teachers of the Jewish faith are called rabbis. They lead worship in the synagogue, conduct marriage and funeral ceremonies and give people advice on religious matters.

The **Sabbath** (from sunset on Friday to sunset on Saturday) is the Jewish holy day.

Shabbat

Shabbat is the Jewish day of rest. It begins just before sunset on a Friday night and lasts until after dark on Saturday. Shabbat is very important to Jewish people: they dress in their best clothes, serve the best food, set the table beautifully and light candles. Often guests are invited to share food, stories and prayers. Special loaves of bread called challot are served during Shabbat.

Temples are called synagogues

The central **features** are: the Holy Ark – a large cupboard at the front containing the Torah scrolls.

The bimah (in Orthodox **synagogues**) – a raised platform from which the scroll is read. The ner tamid ('eternal light', symbol of the eternal presence of God) – hanging from the ceiling.