



# Judaism

Religious Education Knowledge Organiser

## An overview of the religion:



Judaism is one of the world's major religions. It is the world's 10<sup>th</sup> largest religion, with about 14.6 million followers.

Jews are the people who follow Judaism. Like Christians and Muslims, Jews believe that there is only one God, who created the world and everything in it.

Abraham is seen as the father of the Jewish religion. Jews believe that Judaism began when he started worshipping one God instead of many. Judaism began in the Middle East but there are now Jewish people all across the world.

## Question and Answers on Judaism.

<p>Where do most Jews live in the world?</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There are around 14.6 million Jews in the world.</li> <li>• The United States and Israel have 81% of the world's total Jewish population.</li> <li>• Some of the other countries with large Jewish populations include France, Canada, Russia, the United Kingdom, Argentina and Germany.</li> </ul>
<p>How many different types of Jews are there?</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There are many different branches of Judaism.</li> <li>• The strictest branch of the religion follow all of Judaism's original laws and customs; these are called Orthodox Jews.</li> </ul>
<p>Where and how do Jews worship? Why?</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Synagogues are where Jewish people go to worship.</li> <li>• In Orthodox synagogues, men and women sit separately.</li> <li>• In synagogues men cover their heads.</li> <li>• Synagogues have large rooms for prayers, and normally smaller rooms for studying.</li> <li>• The front of a synagogue faces towards Jerusalem.</li> </ul>
<p>What is the Torah?</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The main holy book of Judaism is the Torah, written in Hebrew.</li> <li>• The Torah are written in Hebrew on rolls of parchment. The scrolls are never touched when they are read from.</li> <li>• Readers use a pointer called a yad.</li> </ul>

## The Key Beliefs of Judaism:

### The Story of Abraham

Abraham is an important figure in Judaism, Christianity and Islam. His story is told in the Genesis section of the Christian Bible. According to the story, Abraham made an agreement with God, in which he promised to be faithful and to teach his laws to the world. In return God gave Abraham and his descendants the land of Israel. Even though Abraham was 99, and his wife Sarah 90, God enabled them to have a son, Isaac, forming the first Jewish family.

### The Four Stages of Life



Jews believe in four important stages of life, and mark each with a religious ceremony. The four are: birth, becoming an adult, marriage and death.

When Jewish boys (aged 13) and Jewish girls (aged 12) become Jewish adults, they have a bar mitzvah (for boys) or bat mitzvah (for girls) ceremony. At these ages, Jewish religion, law and social life judges that the boys and girls become responsible for their own actions. The ceremony is usually held on the first Shabbat (Jewish day of rest) after their birthday. In a bar mitzvah ceremony, a boy must read passages from the Torah.

### Festivals and celebrations

Jews enjoy many ceremonies and festivals as a part of their religion. Passover takes place in March or April, and is when Jewish people remember how God brought them out of Egypt (the Exodus). A special meal is created to remind the Jews of the good and bad times in the past. It includes hard boiled egg, parsley, boiled potato, lettuce, horseradish, chopped apples and walnuts. Hannukah takes place in December and is known as 'the Jewish festival of lights.' People light candles, exchange presents, and eat foods such as latkes (potato pancakes) and sufganiot (jam doughnuts).



## Key Vocabulary:

Judaism,	Jew,	Torah,	Synagogue,
Abraham,	Passover,	Hanukkah,	Bar Mitzvah,
Bat Mitzvah,	Middle East,	Exodus,	Jerusalem