

Learning About World Religions: Judaism

What are the central teachings of Judaism, and why did they survive to modern day?

PREVIEW

Think of a tradition that is shared and preserved in your family. It might be a favorite recipe, a story, an activity, or a special custom. Briefly describe your tradition in the space below, and then answer the questions that follow.

My family tradition:

How long has your family had this tradition?

What challenges have you or your family faced in trying to preserve this tradition?

In what ways have you or your family tried to pass this tradition along to others?

READING NOTES

Key Content Terms

As you complete the Reading Notes, use these terms in your answers.

polytheism
monotheism

Talmud
ethics

exile
Jewish Diaspora

Yavneh

Section 2

Complete the matrix below by doing the following:

- In the first column, identify the four central beliefs and teachings of Judaism, as discussed in Section 2.
- In the second column, briefly describe each belief or teaching.
- In the third column, explain how each belief or teaching is influential today.

Central Teachings of Judaism		
Teaching	Description	Influence Today

Section 3

As you learned in the previous section, the study of tradition and history is a very important teaching of Judaism. The dialogue below between a student and a rabbi concerns the beginning of the Jewish Diaspora. Complete the dialogue by filling in the rabbi's speech bubbles with sentences that answer the student's questions.

Student:

How did the Jewish Diaspora begin, and why was it difficult for followers of Judaism?

Rabbi:

The Jewish Diaspora began in 597 B.C.E., when ...

Student:

Which foreign powers ruled Judah, and how did they treat the Jews?

Rabbi:

The Babylonians were conquered in 539 B.C.E. by the ...

Student:

What happened after the Jews rose up against the Romans in 66 C.E.? in 135 C.E.?

Rabbi:

The Jews kept the Romans out of Jerusalem for three years, but in 70 C.E. ...

Section 4

Continue the dialogue between the student and the rabbi to explain how Judaism survived and developed during the Jewish Diaspora. Fill in the rabbi's speech bubbles with sentences that answer the student's questions.

Student:

Where did the Jews live during the Jewish Diaspora?

Rabbi:

After losing control of their homeland, Jews were exiled . . .

Student:

Who was Yohannan ben Zaccai, and why was he significant?

Rabbi:

Yohannan ben Zaccai was a rabbi who . . .

Student:

What new practices developed over time that helped Judaism survive?

Rabbi:

New practices were introduced to ensure that . . .

If your class is doing the activity for this chapter, complete the chart below.

If your class is not doing the activity, skip the following chart.

Complete the chart below by identifying five or more similarities between the classroom activity and the information you read about in this lesson. Include at least one similarity for each section of reading. One example is done for you.

Classroom Activity	Teachings and History of Judaism
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The first classroom truth we learned was that our class has only one true teacher. • • • • • • 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The first central teaching of Judaism—monotheism—is that there is only one God. • • • • • •

PROCESSING

Find a newspaper or magazine article about a current topic that reflects one of the four central teachings of Judaism. Then, write a paragraph in the space below that tells which teaching the article reflects and how.

Timeline Skills

Analyze the Unit 2 timeline in your book. Also think about what you have learned in this unit. Then answer the following questions.

1. Which of these events happened first: Abraham's migration to Canaan, Kushite pharaohs rule Egypt, or the reign of Hatshepsut?
2. Who was responsible for building the Great Pyramid of Egypt?
3. About how many years after the reign of Khufu did Ramses the Great rule Egypt?
4. For about how long did the African kingdom of Kush exist?
5. About when did Hatshepsut rule Egypt, and what was significant about her reign as pharaoh?
6. Did the Kushite pharaohs rule Egypt before or after Ramses the Great?
7. During whose reign was the First Temple of Jerusalem built?
8. How many years were the Jews held in captivity in Babylon?
9. When did Kush attack Roman forts? What happened as a result?
10. What is significant about the event that took place in 135 C.E.?

Critical Thinking

Use the timeline and the chapters in the unit to answer the following questions.

11. Both Egypt and Kush flourished along the Nile River during this time period.
What geographic conditions supported the rise of civilization in this region?

12. How did the relationship between Egypt and Kush change over time?

13. According to the timeline, Abraham moved to Canaan in 1950 B.C.E.

a. Why is this event significant in the development of Judaism?

b. What other important contribution did Abraham make?

14. If you could add three more events to this timeline, which ones would you choose? List each event and explain why you think it is important enough to add to the timeline.

a.

b.

c.