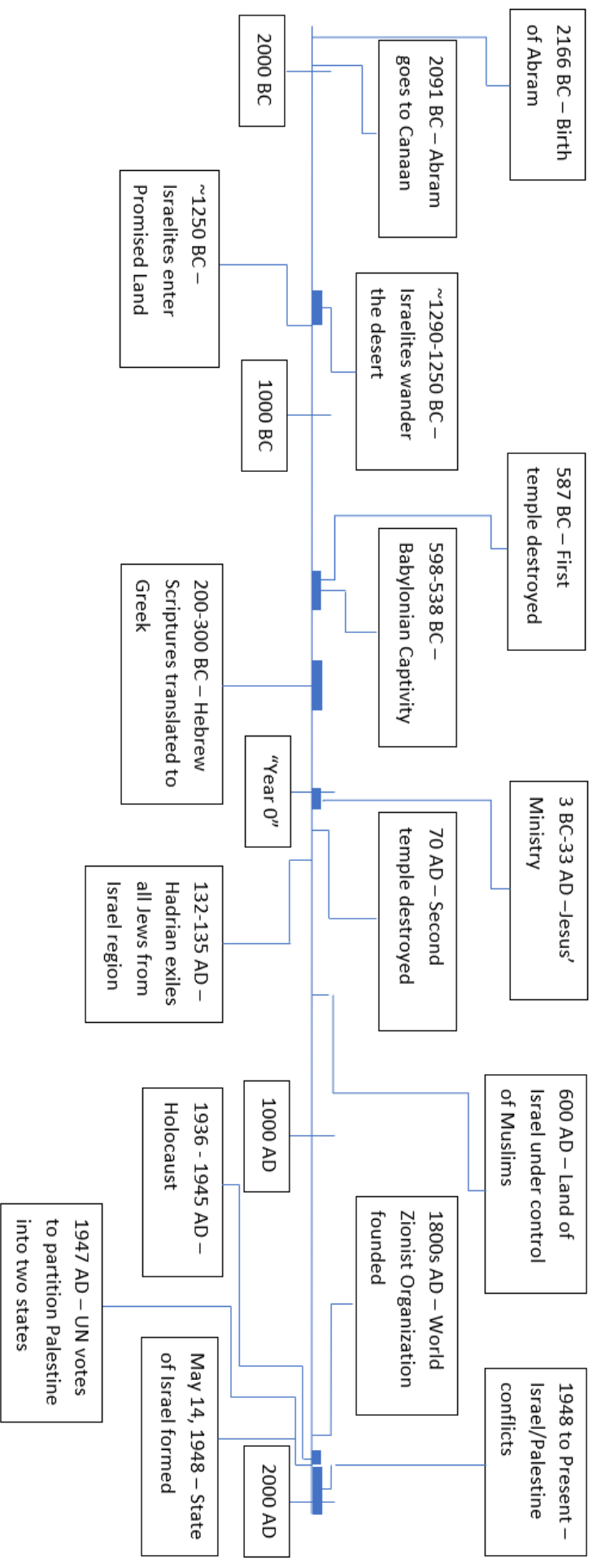


A. Characteristics of Judaism

- a. Belief system – Judaism as it is largely practiced today originated after the destruction of the second temple in AD 70
 - i. History of Judaism (turn to page 2)
 1. Turning point for Judaism – destruction of the second temple
 - a. Transformed Judaism from a sacramental system to a synagogue system
 - b. Rift between Jews and Jews who believed in Jesus grows extremely wide here
 - c. Jewish exile from Israel land permanently separated Jews and Christian Jews – Christian Jews were no longer considered Jews
 - ii. Creeds and Tenets
 1. No formal creed – sometimes call a “religion of deed, not creed”
 2. Emphasis more on how one acts than what one believes
 3. Most common belief is that Jewish people do not believe in Jesus
 4. Schema – recited with the *bracha* (“blessing”)
 - a. Deuteronomy 6:4
 - b. Deuteronomy 11:13-21
 - c. Numbers 15:37
 5. Maimonides’s Thirteen Principles of Faith
 - a. I believe by complete faith that the Creator, blessed be His name,...
 - i. ...is the Creator and Guide for all created beings. He alone made, makes, and will make all that is created.
 - ii. ...is a Unity, and there is no union in any way like Him. He alone is our God, who was, who is, and who is to be.
 - iii. ...is not a body, is not affected by physical matter, and nothing whatsoever can compare to Him.
 - iv. ...is the first and is the last.
 - v. ...to Him alone is it fitting to make prayer and to another shall not be made
 - vi. I believe by complete faith that all the words of the prophets are true.
 - vii. I believe by complete faith that the prophesy of Moses our teacher, may peace rest upon him, was true and that he was the father of all prophets that preceded him as well as all that came after him.
 - viii. I believe by complete faith that the whole Torah now found in our hands was the exact same one given to Moses, may peace rest upon him.
 - ix. I believe by complete faith that this is the Torah, and it shall not be changed, and it shall not be replaced with another from the Creator, blessed be His name.
 - x. ...knows every action done by each human being as well as all their thoughts, as it was said, “it is He that fashions their hearts together and He ponders all their deeds” (Psalms 33:15).
 - xi. ...rewards all who keep His commandments and punishes all those who transgress His commands.
 - xii. I believe by complete faith in the coming of the Messiah, and even though he tarry in waiting, in spite of that, I will still wait expectantly for him each day that he will come.
 - xiii. I believe by complete faith that there will be a resurrection of the dead at the time that will be pleasing before the Creator, blessed be His name, and the remembrance of Him will be exalted forever and for all eternity.



- b. Community – The Tribe
 - i. Includes all Jewish people regardless of religious or cultural experience (with one exception)
 - ii. Makes no distinction for Jews who cease to be religious or even practice other religions (with one exception)
 - iii. Defined by the mother's lineage or through proper conversion
 - iv. Ethnic Jews
 - 1. Date back to God's call to Abram
 - v. Religious Jews
 - 1. Follow God's laws (mitzvot)
 - vi. You can be one or the other, or both
 - c. Ritual – sacrificial system and synagogue system
 - i. Halakah – defines how Jews walk through life, guided by a system of ethics and the study of God
 - ii. Prayer and worship
 - iii. Festivals and feasts
 - 1. 8 primary feasts throughout the year
 - d. Emotional experiences – not really a thing in Judaism
 - i. Bar Mitzvah
 - ii. Remembrance of events in Jewish history through ceremony, worship, prayers
 - e. Material expression
 - i. Tzitzit – tassels (Numbers 15:38); commands that blue cord tassels be worn on the ends of clothing to remind Jewish people of God's laws
 - ii. Yarmulke – skullcap; not a biblical command, but instead by Maimonides when he declared that Jewish law required men to cover their heads during prayer
 - iii. Payess – sidelocks (Leviticus 19:27); usually worn by men in the Orthodox community
 - iv. Star of David – not biblical, but became popular in the 1800s when Zionism rose in popularity; Jews wanted a unifying symbol like the cross
 - f. Sacredness – God is holy, people made holy through sacrificial system and synagogue system
- B. Sacred reality
- a. Monotheism – extremely strict interpretation
 - i. Second Commandment – out of respect and fear, tradition grew to not speak God's name
 - ii. God has no physical substance – being made “in the image of God” means that we have the ability to perceive, understand, and discern
 - b. Messiah
 - i. Rabbis teach against a trinitarian understanding of God by including the word “noncompound” as a descriptor of the one omniscient, transcendent, creator God
 - ii. Misunderstanding of what the Trinity is (but really, who actually understands?)
 - iii. Jews do not believe Jesus is the Messiah – acknowledgement of this would be professing Jesus is the second part of a triune God
 - 1. Jesus declared Himself to be God – John 10:22-38
 - 2. Jesus' trial was mainly focused on this claim that He said He was God – Matthew 26:57-68
 - iv. Messiah is believed to *not* be divine, but Jews have not always believed this
 - c. Do Jews, Christians, and Muslims all worship the same God?
- C. Focus of Beliefs and Practices
- a. Sacramental orientation – Shabbat
 - i. Many prayers and rituals that can be done throughout the day, every day

b. Prophetic orientation – Halakah

- i. Interpretation of Torah and accompanying scriptures and writings
- ii. Pilpul – “to search”, “to debate”
 1. Occurred in synagogues, process of interpreting Scriptures
 2. Rabbinic interpretations of Scripture – used scholarly arguments as credibility
 3. Jesus engaged in pilpul, but His credibility was His own and not of other rabbis
 - a. Examples: Sermon on the Mount (Matthew 5-7, Luke 4:14-30, Mark 1:22)

D. Views of the World and Life

a. Words and Scripture

i. Tanakh

1. All Hebrew scriptures, including the Torah
2. Acronym for TNK – Torah (Law), Nevi'im (Prophets), Ketuvim (Writings)
3. Arranged thematically
 - a. Nevi'im – Joshua, Judges, Samuel, Kings; Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, 12 Minor Prophets
 - b. Ketuvim – Psalms, Proverbs, Job; Solomon, Ruth, Lamentations, Ecclesiastes, Esther; Daniel, Ezra-Nehemiah, Chronicles
4. Torah – “arrow that hits the mark”
 - a. Oral Torah – when God gave Moses the words to write, He also gave him more, including interpretation of the text that Moses handed down orally from generation to generation
 - b. Written Torah – first 5 books of the Bible; Pentateuch
 - i. Includes the 613 mitzvot (“commandments”), along with their interpretation
 - ii. 248 positive commandments and 365 prohibitions
 - iii. These cannot all be kept as many relate to temple sacrificial system and the theocratic state of Israel
 - iv. Mitzvot rabbanan – “laws from the rabbis”
 1. Laws put in place by rabbis to avoid breaking the mitzvot
 2. Also called “fences” around the Torah
 - c. Talmud – volumes for study, discourse, and fluid interpretation of law that allows the Jewish community to survive religiously throughout the Diaspora
 - i. Most of Talmud was developed after AD 70
 - d. Midrash – group of sermonic material from the first 10 centuries
 - i. Interpretive material and commentaries on both written and oral Torah and specific passages of Hebrew Scriptures
 - e. Responsa – ‘She-elot u-Teshvot’ (questions and answers)
 - i. A book of case law that reflects changes in Jewish law of Halakah as it evolved following exile from Jerusalem out into the Diaspora
 - f. Septuagint – “translation of the seventy”
 - i. Translation of Hebrew Scriptures into Koine Greek
 - g. Zohar – “splendor”, “radiance”
 - i. Primary work of Kabbalistic Judaism
 - ii. Compendium of Jewish mystical thought
 - iii. Apocryphal, but circulated as true

b. Human Purpose

- i. Humans are central part of a divine plan – following the mitzvot are the most important
- ii. Man is created with two natures: good and “evil”
 1. Good is moral conscience that one does not acquire till after Bar Mitzvah
 2. Evil is more selfishness – Satan as personification of selfish desires
 3. Tikkun Olam – repair of the world
 - a. No teaching of original sin; we do not bear guilt for our ancestors’ choices

- b. Fulfill the mitzvot and tzedakah (acts of righteousness)
 - 4. Free will – Jews believe we can choose good, but we are all responsible for our choices
- iii. Jews are taught to do good works to achieve a more perfect world
- iv. Sin
 - 1. All violations of law are considered sins, but there are different kinds of sins
 - a. People are born with inclination to do evil
 - b. Children are not necessarily responsible for their sins until their Bar Mitzvah
 - 2. Three levels of transgressions
 - a. Intentional abusers – most serious sins
 - b. Accidents – still responsible, but sin is considered less serious
 - c. Unawareness – person is not held accountable
- c. Salvation and Afterlife
 - i. Salvation not intentionally discussed
 - ii. Jews believe all they have to do is repent and God forgives them, and they become righteous
 - iii. Repentance must come from good works
 - iv. Historically Judaism understanding of heaven and hell similar to Christianity
 - 1. With destruction of second temple, many Jews lost hope in a better life, rabbis began to speculate about the afterlife
 - 2. Began to speculate about Olam haBa (“the world to come”); the opposite of this was interpreted as Sheol
 - 3. Early concept of “purgatory” began here – Sheol
 - a. Kaddish – mourning prayer said for recently deceased, their soul stays in Sheol for a year and is then released
 - 4. The truly righteous go straight to Olam haBa after death, the truly wicked go to Genhimon (cursed valley) and everyone else goes to Sheol for awhile
- d. Festivals and Feasts
 - i. Leviticus 23
 - ii. Shabbat – Sabbath
 - iii. Rosh Hashanah – Feast of Trumpets; begins with blowing of the shofar and opening of the three books: the book of life, the book of death, and the intermediate book; Genesis 22 is read as well
 - iv. Yom Kippur
 - 1. God writes the names of everyone in the intermediate book (from Rosh Hashanah) into either the book of life or the book of death (Revelation 21:22-27)
 - 2. Many Jews believe the book of life is simply living on this earth, so if they live to hear the shofar blown again, their name was written in the book of life that past year
 - v. Feast of the Tabernacle/Sukkoth
 - 1. Reminder from God that “your generations may know that I made the people of Israel dwell in booths when I brought them out of the land of Egypt: I am the Lord your God” (Leviticus 23:43)
 - 2. Feast that assures us of God’s great provision
 - 3. Last 8 days – sometimes people build temporary houses in their yards during this time
 - 4. Jesus told us of the provision of the Holy Spirit during Sukkoth (John 7:37-39)
 - vi. Hannukah
 - 1. Not described in Leviticus
 - 2. Commemorates rededication of the second temple
 - 3. Festival of Lights – miracle of oil burning for 8 days straight
 - 4. John 10:22-42
 - vii. Purim
 - 1. Not described in Leviticus
 - 2. Reflection on anti-Semitism and God’s promise of protection

3. Originates from Esther 9:26-28
4. Four observances
 - a. Reading of the scroll of Esther – usually put on as a play by children
 - b. A lavish meal
 - c. Sending of gifts of food to one another
 - d. Giving to the needy

viii. Passover

1. Story is told through eating of ceremonial foods and reading from Torah and Talmud
2. Passover Seder – elaborate meal full of symbolism about redemption and Messianic hope
3. Seder plate
 - a. Z'roah – arm; a roasted shank bone of lamb
 - b. Beitza – egg
 - c. Maror – bitter herbs; usually freshly grated horseradish
 - d. Charoset – mix of finely chopped apples, nuts, and cinnamon mixed with wine
 - e. Karpas – parsley
4. Other elements
 - a. Matzos – unleavened bread
 - b. Four cups of red wine (Exodus 6:6-7)
 - c. Salt water
 - d. A pillow or cushion on the left arm of each person at the table
 - e. Cup of Elijah

ix. Shavuot – The Feast of Weeks

1. Absorbed the Feast of Firstfruits after the destruction of the second temple
2. 50 days long, starts after the second day of Passover
3. Celebration of receiving the Torah
4. Pentecost occurs during Shavuot

E. Witnessing to Jews

- a. Misconceptions to be aware of:
 - i. “We don’t need to witness to Jewish people because they are God’s chosen people and have their own way to heaven”
 1. John 14:6
 - ii. “The Jews had their chance and they rejected Jesus, now salvation is for the Church”
 1. Romans 1:16
 - iii. “Why bother witnessing to Jewish people if Paul assures us in Romans 11 that ‘all Israel will be saved’?”
 1. Might stem from Luther’s 1543 treatise