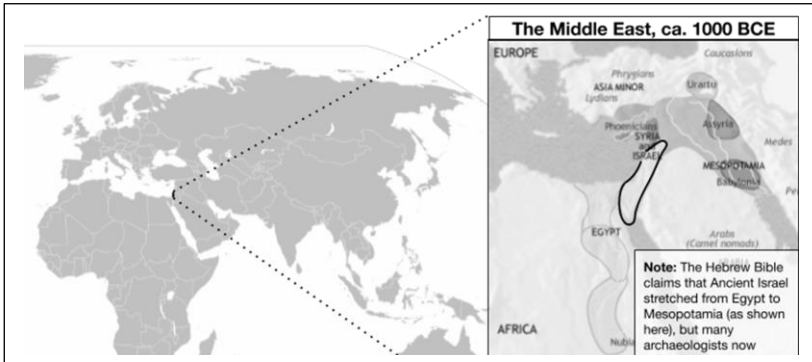
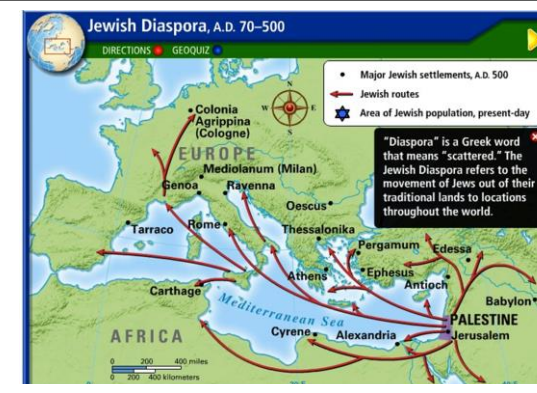


# Aim #8: How did Judaism & Jews develop?

## Roots of Judaism

NYS SS Framework: 9.2a, 2b



### Mini Lecture

- About 4,000 years ago in the Fertile Crescent, the ancient Israelites developed Judaism, one of today's major religions. Unlike neighboring peoples, Israelites were **monotheistic**, believing in only one god.
- They believed every event reflected God's plan. So, they recorded events and laws in the **Torah**. It is the most sacred text of the Israelites, or Jews.
- According to the Torah, about 2000 B.C., **Abraham** "founded" Judaism & is considered the father of the Israelites. The Israelites believed that God made a **covenant**, or binding agreement, with Abraham. This covenant promised a special relationship with God & a homeland in Canaan.
- However, famine forced the Israelites into Egypt, where they became slaves. Much later, **Moses** led their **exodus**, or departure, from Egypt back to Canaan. There, they established the kingdom of Israel around 1000 B.C. under the second king, **David**; the feuding 12 tribes of Israel were united into one kingdom.
- Then, David's son **Solomon** undertook the task of turning Jerusalem into an impressive capital city. He completed a massive temple & increased Israel's influence in the region. However, after his death, the kingdom split & eventually fell to the Assyrians & Babylonians.
- Israelite society was **patriarchal**, meaning that men held the greatest authority. Also from early times, law was central to Judaism. The Torah contains laws on such subjects as cleanliness, food preparation, & crime. Also in the Torah is a special set of laws called the **Ten Commandments**. These laws stress moral conduct & religious duty, such as keeping the **Sabbath**.
- Often in Jewish history, **prophets**, or spiritual leaders, arose. They urged social justice & taught strong codes of **ethics**, or moral standards of behavior.
- During a 500-year period called the **Diaspora**, the Jews left or were exiled from Israel, & they spread out around the world. Still, they maintained their identity in close-knit communities, following religious laws & traditions. This helped them to survive centuries of persecution.
- Judaism has been an important religion. From that culture & faith, both Christianity & Islam emerged, creating an ethical legacy we call the Judeo-Christian tradition.

### What is Religion?

- A set of **beliefs** about the nature of the universe, the existence of one god or several gods, the meaning of life, & what happens after death.
- A set of **customs & practices** that relate to the worship of one god or several gods, & a set of rules for proper conduct.
- An **organization**, such as a church or synagogue, that oversees the conduct of religious practices.



\*Think about how religion relates to & influences its society & its arts

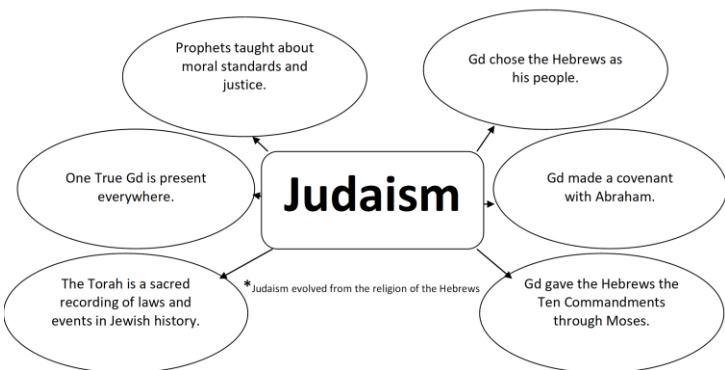
### Review Questions:

1. What made the ancient Israelites' belief system unique from others at the time?
2. What was the Diaspora?
3. Who is considered the "father of the Israelites"?

### Resources/Documents:

- The Covenant
- The Ten Commandments
- The Babylonian Exile

**Further Reading:** Chapter 2, Section 5





## What are the major beliefs of Judaism? How does Judaism impact the lives of Jewish people?

**Directions:** As you read about the following beliefs of Judaism, answer the questions that accompany each section

### 1. The Covenant

A **covenant** is an **agreement**. Jewish people believe that God made covenants with several figures mentioned in the Torah. The covenants below are between God and the father of Judaism, Abraham.

Now the LORD had said unto Abram, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred [relatives], and from thy father's house, unto a land that I will shew [show] thee:

And I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great; and thou shalt be a blessing:

And I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee: and in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed.[...]

In the same day the LORD made a **covenant** with Abram, saying, Unto thy seed have I given this land, from the river of Egypt unto the great river, the river Euphrates[...]

And God said unto Abraham, Thou shalt keep my covenant therefore, thou, and thy seed after thee in their generations.

Source: Genesis 12:1- 3; Genesis 15:18- 21; Genesis 17:9- 12; King James Version of the Holy Bible

#### 1. Based on this section of the Torah, God promised Abraham...

### 2. The Ten Commandments

Most belief systems have **ethical/moral codes of conduct** that describe how one should live their life based on the beliefs of that religion. For Judaism, the **Ten Commandments**, that appear in the Torah, are the clearest code of conduct. According to the Torah, God inscribed the commandments on two stone tablets and gave them to Moses to share with the rest of the Israelites.

And God spake all these words, saying,

(1) I am the LORD thy God[...]

(2) Thou shalt have no other gods before me. Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven [engraved] image, or any likeness of anything that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth. Thou shalt not bow down thyself to them, nor serve them[...]

(3) Thou shalt not take the name of the LORD thy God in vain[...]

(4) Remember the sabbath day, to keep it holy[....] in it thou shalt not do any work, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, thy manservant, nor thy maidservant, nor thy cattle, nor thy stranger that is within thy gates[....]

(5) Honour thy father and thy mother: that thy days may be long upon the land which the LORD thy God giveth thee.

(6) Thou shalt not kill.

(7) Thou shalt not commit adultery [cheat on one's husband or wife].

(8) Thou shalt not steal.

(9) Thou shalt not bear false witness [lie] against thy neighbour.

(10) Thou shalt not covet [want] thy neighbour's house, thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's wife, nor his manservant, nor his maidservant, nor his ox, nor his ass [donkey], nor any thing that is thy neighbour's[....]

**1. Identify one piece of evidence from the Ten Commandments that suggests that Judaism is a monotheistic religion.**

**2. Based on the Ten Commandments, describe a person who lives their life according to God's laws.**

## How did Judaism impact the lives of Ancient Israelites?

### That Babylonian Exile (Captivity)

**Directions:** Watch this History Channel video clip, [Exile of the Jews](#) and read the excerpt below, then answer the questions that follow.

Starting around 597 BCE, the **Babylonian Empire**, centered in the city of Babylon in the Fertile Crescent, conquered the Kingdom of **Judah**. The upper class Jewish people, Israelites who lived in Judah, were ordered by the Babylonian King, Nebuchadnezzar II, to leave Jerusalem and live in captivity in Babylon.

The period of time from **597 to 539 BCE**, which ended when the Persian king Cyrus the Great took over Babylon and allowed the Jews to return to Judah, is known as the **Babylonian Exile or Captivity**.

This period had a great effect on the Jewish people. They wondered how such a terrible thing could happen to god's "chosen people." In addition, their sacred temple where they worshiped their god was destroyed.

As a result, some of the Jewish people in Babylon became more religious. They commemorated the fall of Jerusalem with days of prayer and celebrated the Sabbath (day of rest set aside for religious reasons). The profession of the **scribes**, people who copied religious documents, grew in importance. Historical writings and religious teachings were compiled and revised by the scribes to create the Torah. The writers viewed the recent events as punishment for their sins, especially the sin of worshipping gods other than the one god. At the same time, the scribes and others in exile hoped that the Jewish faith would bring the Israelites together and that they would be able to rebuild the Temple once the exile was over.

The Babylonian exile represents both one of Judaism's darkest hours and also the beginning of its history as an enduring universal religion that gave birth to the later monotheistic traditions of Christianity and Islam.

**Based on the video and reading above identify two pieces of evidence that show that Judaism unified the Jewish people.**

## How did Judaism spread?

**Directions:** Examine the images below, then fill out the chart with what you see, think, and wonder.



A map illustrating the location of synagogues in antiquity (1st-11th century CE). Each circle or star represents a location where there is some evidence of the existence of a Jewish temple created as a result of the Jewish diaspora caused by the Roman destruction of the Second Temple and resulting conflicts.

<p><b>See</b></p> <p>List three things you <b>see</b> in map above.</p>	<p><b>Think</b></p> <p>Based on your observations, who do you <b>think</b> diaspora means and what do you think caused the Jewish diaspora?</p>	<p><b>Wonder</b></p> <p>Write two questions you have about the map.</p>

## Spread: The Jewish Diaspora

**Directions: Read the text and analyze the map below, then answer the questions that follow.**

The term **diaspora** (in Ancient Greek, διασπορά – "*a scattering or sowing of seeds*") refers to any people or ethnic group forced to leave its traditional homeland, and the spreading out of those people that results from it. It is especially used to with reference to the Jewish people, who have lived most of their historical existence as a *diasporan* people.

The Jewish diaspora began with the Babylonian Exile. Although some of the captives that were forced to live in Babylon returned to Judea after they were released by the Persian King Cyrus the Great, others settled elsewhere. They were *dispersed* in lands around the Mediterranean Sea. Major centers of Jewish diasporan culture emerged in such places as Alexandria, Asia Minor, and Babylonia.

A second major expulsion and diaspora of the Jewish people from Judea took place between 66 CE and 136 CE. In 66 CE, the Roman Empire had been in control of Judea for some time, but had mostly respected the rights of the Jewish people to practice their religion. Due to Roman administrators who were disrespectful towards their religion, and disagreements over taxes, the Judeans rebelled against the Romans. In response, the Roman military destroyed most of Jerusalem including the Second Temple to the Jewish God. For the next 66 years tensions between the Judeans and Romans intensified with riots and wars and calmed. At the end of this period, much of the Jewish population had either chosen to leave Judea or were forced out.

Some Jewish people remained in Judea or the surrounding area, but most left. In the sixth century there were 43 Jewish communities in Palestine, scattered along the coast, in the Negev, east of the Jordan, and in villages in the Galilee region, and in the Jordan River valley. Jewish communities expelled from Judea were sent, or decided to go, to various Roman provinces in the Middle East, Europe, and North Africa.

**1. Why did the Jewish diaspora occur?**

**2. Where did Jewish people spread their religion after they were expelled from Judea?**

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