



Overview

Judaism is one of the world's major religions. It is the **world's 10th largest religion**, with about 14.6 million followers. It is around 4,000 years old.

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.

The main holy book of Judaism is the **Torah**, written in **Hebrew**. **Synagogues** are Jewish worship buildings.



Image of the Great Synagogue of Florence, in Italy, Europe.



Key vocabulary and spellings

Bimah – The platform from which the Torah is read.

Hanukkah – A Jewish festival which takes place in December.

Kippah – A head covering, also known as a skullcap.



Menorah – A sacred candelabrum with seven branches.



Mezuzah – A parchment inscribed with texts and attached in a case to the doorpost of a Jewish house.

Passover – A Jewish holiday which celebrates the escapes of Ancient Hebrews from Egypt.

Rabi – Jewish religious leader.



Shofar – A ram's horn trumpet used in religious ceremonies.

Star of David – The main Jewish symbol, named after the Jewish king David.

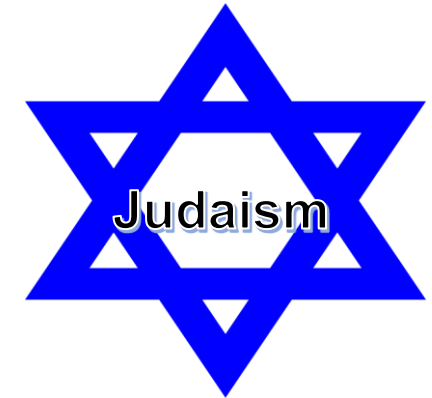
Synagogue – The Jewish place of worship.

Tallit – A white shawl worn by Jewish males during a religious service.

Ten Commandments – The rules God gave to Jews to live their lives by.

The ark – A special cupboard where the Torah is stored when it is not in use.

Torah – The Jewish Holy book, written in Hebrew.



The Synagogue

The **Synagogue** is the Jewish place of worship. It is built so that it faces Jerusalem, the Jewish holy city. Inside, men cover their heads by wearing a **tallit** and sometimes women will cover their heads too. The service is led by the **Rabbi**. There are readings from the **Torah scrolls** which are taken out of **the ark**. In a Synagogue, you will also find a **menorah, the star of David, the Ten Commandments** displayed, an everlasting candle and the **Bimah**. In Orthodox synagogues, men and women sit separately. In progressive synagogues, men and women can sit together and worship. Synagogues have large rooms for prayers, and normally smaller rooms for studying.



