

Judaism

- The period covered by the Hebrew Biblical narratives is a long one from about 2000 BC to the end of the 6th century BC.
- The story of Israel as a nation unfolds beginning with the founding of the people by Abraham.
- Long after the time of Abraham, an agricultural crisis let the Israelites to move to Egypt.

History of Judaism

- But later the Israelites were turned into slaves.
- After more than 400 years they were freed from Egyptian bondage under the leadership of Moses and led back to Palestine or Canaan (*ca* 13th century BC).
- Over the next several centuries Israel became a moderately powerful nation under Saul, David, and Solomon.

History of Judaism

- After Solomon's death the Kingdom was divided in two parts.
- The northern segment of Israel was overrun by the Assyrian Empire late in the 8th century BC.
- The southern part known as the nation of Judah was conquered by the Babylonians early in the 6th century.

History of Judaism

- When the southern kingdom ended with the carrying off of most of the remaining Israelites to Babylon, the nation's days as a political and military power were virtually over.
- The Babylonian captivity began what is called the diaspora or dispersion.

History of Judaism

- It is Israel's firm conviction that the one God, Creator of the universe was active in every phase of its history.
- God chose to select Israel from all nations of the world and use it as the vehicle of bringing knowledge of Him to the rest of the nations. This arrangement between God and Israel is called a covenant. God promised to make Israel a great nation.

History of Judaism

- After the return to Palestine from the Babylonian captivity in the 6th century BC. The day of Israel's political power were over.
- The people began to reflect on the meaning of their existence since there seemed to be no new directives from God.

History of Judaism

- When the Romans destroyed the Temple in AD 70 and ended Jewish opposition 60 years later, Jerusalem as the centre of worship ceased to exist.
- The program of the rabbis replaced Temple worship and pilgrimages to Jerusalem with the study of God's law, prayer, and good works.

History of Judaism

- The new place of worship became the local synagogue.
- The Rabbis attempted to standardise religious practices for the dispersed community.
- This collection of rabbinic law, the Mishna, became the primary reference and the core around which the extensive commentaries the Talmud were later compiled.

Torah



- Torah means in Hebrew “to point the way”
- Moses received the Ten Commandments, the basic moral law, directly from God on Mount Sinai.
- In its broadest sense, it is the entire content of Judaism.
- The Torah contains five books: Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy.

Importance of History in Judaism

- It is Israel's firm conviction that one God was active in every phase of its history.
- It is the Jewish view of Israel's past that sets them apart from other states and forged the nature of Judaism.
- Covenant God chose to select Israel from all the nations of the world and use it as the vehicle for bringing knowledge of Him to the rest of the nations. God promised to increase their progeny and the occupation of the Holy land.
- Most of the rituals and festivals commemorate their history

Ethical behavior

- Mankind is, with no choice of its own, created by God and subject to His divine will.
- There is no life for the individual outside the community.
- In rabbinic Judaism, the supreme virtue for individuals and the community is the study of the Torah.

Festivals and holy days

Begins in the spring

- Passover the escape from Egypt
- *Shavout* the giving of the law to Moses
- *Succoth* the Feast of Tabernacles
- *Simchat Torah* conclusion of Torah readings

Begins in the fall

- Rosh Hashasnah the new year
- *Yom Kippur* the Day of Atonement
- *Hanukkah* the independence in the 2nd century BC
- *Purim* deliverance of the Jews in Persia