

JEWISH POPULATION

BY COUNTRY

14,500,000

WORLD TOTAL

83%

LIVE IN ISRAEL AND THE UNITED STATES



Judaism

Mark D. Harris,
MD, MPH, MBA, MDiv, PhD, ThM, DBA(C)

MD Harris Institute

Ancient Polytheism

- Nearly 4,000 years ago, a wealthy Sumerian rancher and his family left Ur on the Persian Gulf and travelled to Haran in northern Mesopotamia. With him came a rejection of the prevalent polytheism of the time and an unshakeable conviction that there was only one God.
- Every civilization, from the Bantu to the Chinese, worshipped gods of the air, the sun, the storm, various animals, ancestors, and host of other “deities.”
- This man opposed them all. Later, he and his barren wife, along with servants and other household members, moved southwest to Canaan.

The Ancient Hebrew Religion

- The ancient Hebrew religion revealed in the Old Testament (Jewish Bible) guided all twelve tribes of descended from Jacob, Abraham's grandson.
- Over the centuries, the tribes consolidated, with Simeon being subsumed into Judah. Many tribes were destroyed, such as when the Assyrians eliminated the ten northern tribes.
- By the beginning of Roman dominance over Palestine, only the tribe of Judah remained prominent.
- With the destruction of the Second Temple under Herod, little of the ancient Hebrew religion was left. Judaism arose.

Second Temple





Modern Judaism

- Modern Judaism grew out of the destruction suffered by the Jews over the centuries. it focuses on rabbis, synagogues, prayer, and Torah reading rather than temple sacrifices. Social action is also a major part of modern Judaism
- There are approximately 15 million people worldwide who adhere to Judaism.

Holy Books (1)

- The primary scripture, the Torah, includes the first five books of the Jewish Bible, which were given in written and oral form by God to Moses on Mount Sinai. Since the Jewish Bible is equivalent to the Christian Old Testament, and the Old Testament precedes the New Testament, the Torah also comprises the first five books of the Christian Bible.
- The Tanach includes all written Hebrew scriptures, including the Torah (law), Nevim (prophets), and Ketuvim (writings). The Tanach is known as the Bible to Jews and as the Old Testament to Christians. Both Jews and Christians consider the Tanach to be scripture in a way that nothing else is.

Holy Books (2)

- The Mishnah is the written record of oral law which expanded into the Talmud. The Talmud is a commentary on the Mishnah.
- The Talmud is actually a record of rabbinic debates on the Torah from the destruction of the Temple (AD 70) and of Judea (AD 135) to the fifth century.
- Modern Judaism is divided into three primary schools, including Orthodox, Conservative, and Reformed.

Holy books

Torah

Nevi'im

Ketuvim

The Jewish Holy book is often known as the Tenakh, an acronym for the initial letters of the names of its three parts, Torah, Kethuvim and Nevi'im.

Other scriptures include the Mishnah and the Talmud.

Jewish Holy Books were originally written in Hebrew, but a Greek translation called the Septuagint has its origin in Alexandria, Egypt and was translated between 300-200 BCE

Translations are widely used both in worship and for private reading and study.

Jewish Beliefs (1)

- As Abraham their forefather, Jews believe that there is one, personal, eternal, and self-existent God. His name is YHWH. YHWH is the God of Israel who saved Israel from the Egyptians, the Assyrians, the Babylonians, and other nations throughout its history. The common thread of Judaism is the desire to maintain Jewish identity to keep the Jewish race alive.
- Reformed and Conservative traditions deny that the sin of Adam and Eve brought sin into the entire human race, a belief which Christians recognize as the doctrine of Original Sin. Instead, Jews have three main approaches to understanding “salvation.”

| | ORTHODOX | CONSERVATIVE | REFORM |
|-----------------------|--|---|---|
| BIBLE/ SCRIPTURE | Torah (five books of Moses). Secondary Hebrew Bible | Both Torah & other inspired books. Revelation on going | Scripture human document preserving history & culture |
| OTHER | Traditional Judaism | Historical Judaism | Liberal Judaism |
| LIFE AFTER LIFE | Resurrection. Life with God or suffering | Tend towards Reform view but less influenced by Eastern mysticism | No concept of personal life. As in E mysticism, merge into impersonal |
| WORSHIP | Synagogue place of worship. Conducted in Hebrew. Women sit separate | Synagogue place of worship. Lesser degree the changes in Reform | Service modernized. English & Hebrew used. Men & women sit together |

Jewish Beliefs (2)

- Individual atonement comes from repenting, praying, and doing good works.
- Simply being ethnically Jewish guarantees Jews admittance to heaven.
- The sufferings of all Jews justify the salvation of each individual Jew. The idea is that since the Jews as a nation have suffered so much, each individual Jew benefits.
- Like in most other faiths, Jews with more good deeds than bad, taking the corporate Jewish suffering into account, are thought to spend eternity in Paradise. People of middling goodness might be reincarnated. Some Jews believe that sinners are tormented, while others hold that they are annihilated.

LEGEND



Ashkenazi
(means Germanic Jews)



Sephardic
(means Iberian Jews)



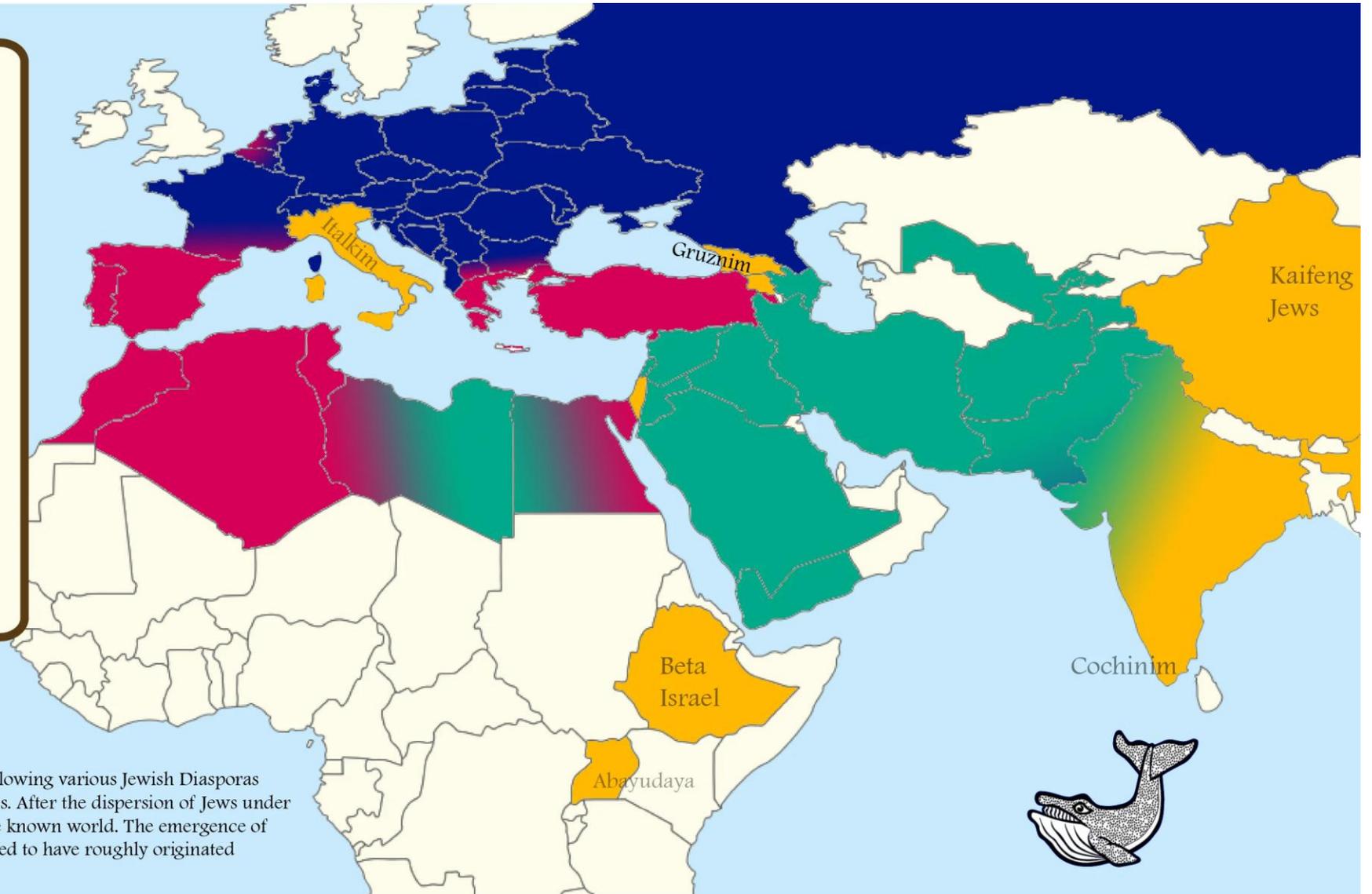
Mizrahi
(means Eastern Jews)



Independent
Grouping

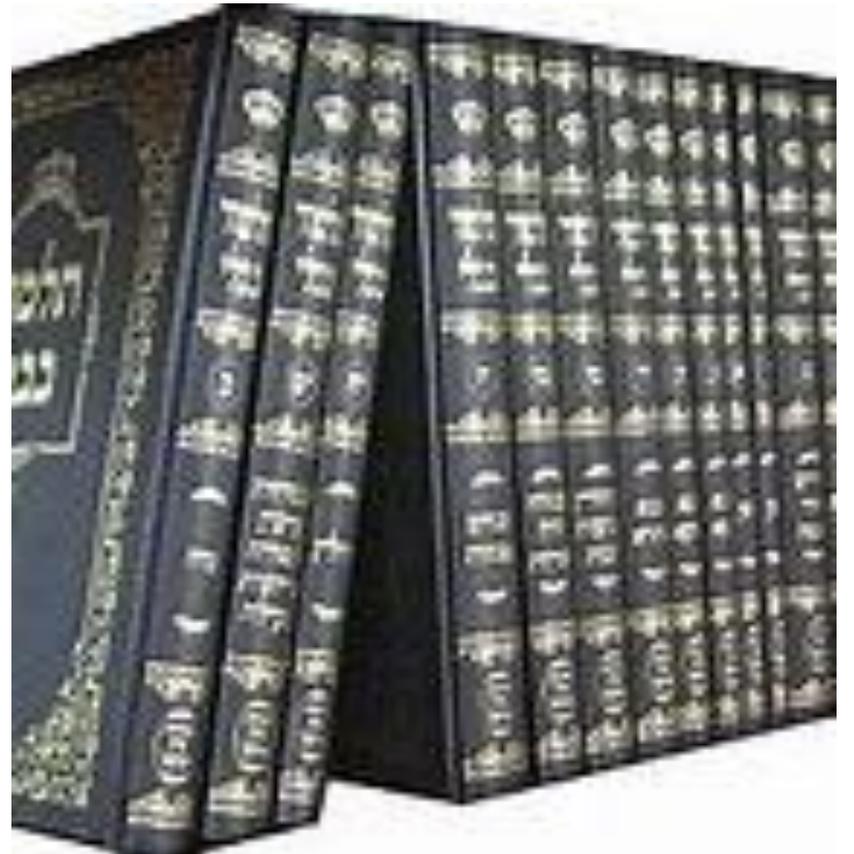
Map of Jewish Ethnic Origin Countries

These cultural and ethnic groups slowly arose following various Jewish Diasporas from Ancient Israel and other Jewish communities. After the dispersion of Jews under Roman rule, many settled in different parts of the known world. The emergence of Ashkenazi and Sephardic Jewish identity is believed to have roughly originated around 800 c.e.



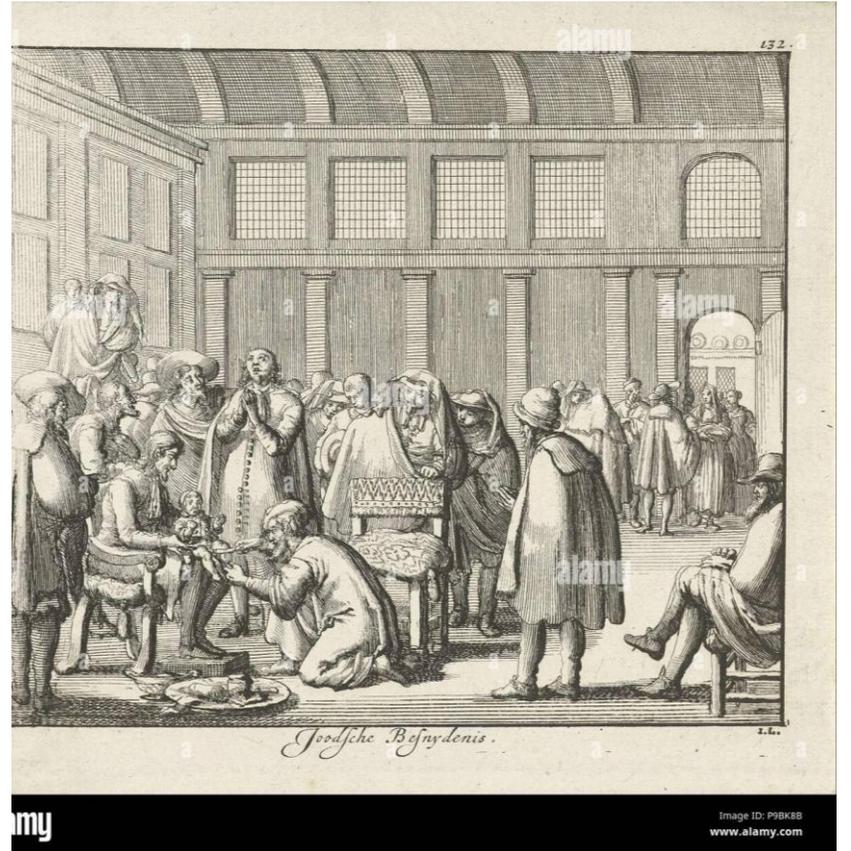
Lifestyle (1)

- Jewish Halakah (laws) include civil and criminal justice, family law, ethics, manners, social institutions, and worship. Halakah influence or even control every area of life for observant Jews.
- Halakah for Jews is similar to Sharia for Muslims, although Jews want to apply Halakah only to themselves while Muslims want to apply Shariah to everyone.



Lifestyle (2)

- Circumcision, the removal of the male foreskin, sets Jews apart from other peoples.
- Ceremonies also serve to keep the Jews distinct. For example, the Bar (age 13) and Bat (age 12) Mitzvah are coming out ceremonies for Jewish boys and girls (respectively). At the end of the Bar or Bat mitzvah, the community grants their young Jews the freedoms and responsibilities of adulthood, including marriage and keeping the Law.



Zionism

- The Star of David is the symbol of the nation of Israel. The Holocaust in World War II was a defining period for modern Judaism.
- Zionism is the belief that Jews must have a homeland, and the Jewish homeland must be in Palestine.
- Kabbalah is Jewish mysticism, analogous to the Sufi tradition in Islam, the Tantric tradition in Buddhism, and the mystic tradition in Christianity.

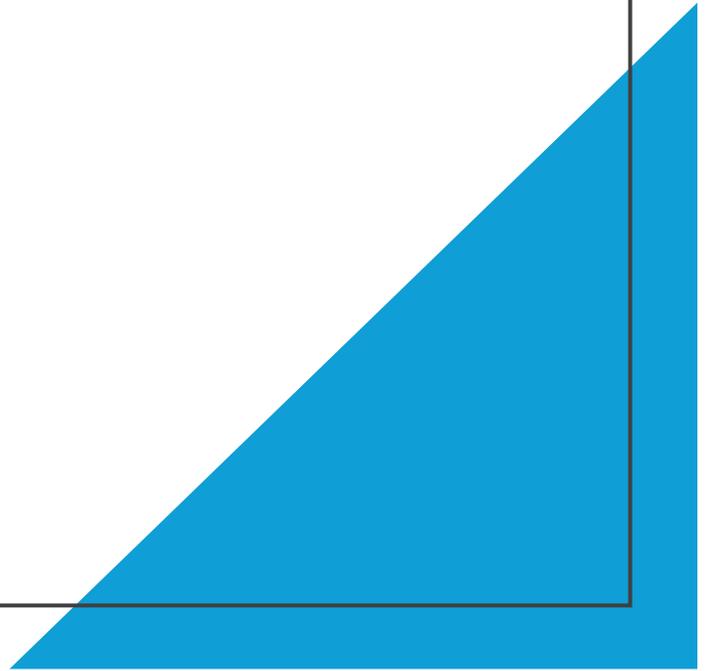
Zionism

- Early Zionist settlements under Ottoman rule



Conclusion

- Discussion



References

- H. Wayne House, Charts of World Religions, Zondervan, 2006