



Abrahamic Monotheism

The story of the Abraham, whose name means “Father of Many,” is the story of a considered to be the patriarch, or father, of the Israelite nation as well as the Jewish religion and subsequently the Christian and Islamic religions.

Abraham’s chief contributions to world history were the origination of the concept of a single, almighty God and the concept that God desires to have a relationship, or covenant, with humanity.



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Abraham's story takes place in the Fertile Crescent region of the Middle East. Abraham lived between 2,000 and 1,500 BCE in Mesopotamia in the city-states of Ur of the Chaldeans and later Haran.



After entering his covenant with God Abraham, whose name before the covenant was Abram, took his family, including his wife Sarah, his nephew Lot, and his many servants and flocks to the Promised Land, Canaan.



Abraham's son Isaac



Isaac's son Jacob
(also known as Israel)



Jacob's son Joseph

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Abraham's beliefs about God and God's covenant were further developed by the other patriarchs.

Specific Terms to Know

Semitic = term for any of the peoples of the Middle East who share a common linguistic heritage (i.e. Arabic, Hebrew, Amharic, Syriac, etc.). A person who speaks one of these languages can be called a **Semite**. Ancient Hebrew scholars believed that these peoples shared a common language because they were all descended from Noah's son Shem. Practically speaking, the negative of the term is usually only used today with those who speak Hebrew, the Jews ... as in anti-Semitic.

Hebrew = this term primarily refers to the language Hebrew, but can also be used describe the ethnic group that speaks Hebrew ... as in Moses gave God's law to the Hebrews.

Israel = this term is used for the modern day Middle Eastern country called Israel, but also for the ancient nation descended from Abraham's grandson Jacob, who was also known as Israel.

Jew = term derived the name of the tribe of Israelites descended from Jacob's son Judah. Today, the term is used for anyone who practices the religion developed by Abraham and Moses, called **Judaism**.



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Moses is the most important developer of Abraham's beliefs about God. Moses has his own revelations of God in the burning bush and on Mt. Sinai. He gives the Israelites the Torah which includes the story of their faith and 613 mitzvot, or laws for living their faith.

Core Beliefs

The textbook summarizes the core beliefs of Judaism this way:

There is one God.

God created everything, including human beings, which he made in his image and likeness.

God chose a people with to share his revelation and to carry his blessing through history – the are the descendents of Abraham.

God made a covenant with the Israelites. The covenant began with Abraham.

Maimonides' 13 Principles of Faith

In his commentary on the Mishna (tractate Sanhedrin, chapter 10), The Medieval Rabbi Moses Maimonides formulates his **13 principles of faith**. They summarized the basic premises of Jewish belief with regards to:

1. The existence of God
2. God's unity
3. God's spirituality and incorporeality
4. God's eternity
5. God alone should be the object of worship
6. Revelation through God's prophets
7. The preeminence of Moses among the prophets
8. God's law given on Mount Sinai
9. The immutability of the Torah as God's Law
10. God's foreknowledge of human actions
11. Reward of good and retribution of evil
12. The coming of the Jewish Messiah
13. The resurrection of the dead