

Conversation Starters

- What were you familiar with in Judaism (if at all)?
- How does Judaism compare or contrast from Hinduism/Buddhism?

Discuss

The heart of the Jewish faith is the belief in one God Who is the Creator and Ruler of the world. Christianity holds to this belief as well, and they share the same God that we read about in the Old Testament of the Bible. In their shared history, we learn that God wants and started a relationship with His people and although that relationship was broken, there is hope and confidence that God would return to restore them and their relationship with God through the promised Messiah.

Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one. Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength. ([Deut. 6:4-5 NIV](#))

The Lord had said to Abram, "Go from your country, your people and your father's household to the land I will show you. "I will make you into a great nation, and I will bless you; I will make your name great, and you will be a blessing. I will bless those who bless you, and whoever curses you I will curse; and all peoples on earth will be blessed through you." ([Genesis 12:1-3 NIV](#))

- Does anything surprise you about Judaism's history and its roots with Christianity?
- How significant is the claim of one God versus multiple?
- What observations do you have about the early Israelites and their relationship with God?

Judaism divided and Christianity was birthed when a group of Jews that held to the promise of the Messiah placed their faith in a Jew who claimed to be that very Messiah – Jesus. Yet the Jewish leaders of the day rejected Jesus and division began.

"Very truly I tell you," Jesus answered, "before Abraham was born, I am!" ([John 8:58 NIV](#))

God said to Moses, "I am who I am. This is what you are to say to the Israelites: 'I am has sent me to you.'" ([Exodus 3:14 NIV](#))

- What made Jesus' claim significant to Judaism?
- How did what Jesus claimed and did change the way the Jews (and all believers today) relate to God?

There were many prophecies about the awaited Messiah. While some expected a powerful leader, the prophecies told of a suffering servant. It was said that the Messiah would be the one to pay the penalty for humanity's sin against God and provide the opportunity to have a relationship with Him.

He was despised and rejected by mankind, a man of suffering... ([Isaiah 53:3 NIV](#))

So, friends, we can now—without hesitation—walk right up to God, into “the Holy Place.” Jesus has cleared the way by the blood of his sacrifice, acting as our priest before God. The “curtain” into God’s presence is his body. So let’s do it—full of belief, confident that we’re presentable inside and out.

([Hebrews 10:19-22 The Message](#))

- What examples in Jesus’s life show the fulfillment of a suffering servant?
- What do you believe about Jesus?

Next Steps

The life of Jesus had a significant impact on the Jewish people. It changed all of history. What questions do you have about the early Jews and Jesus? Write them down. Begin looking for answers. A great place to start is in our upcoming class:

[Genesis: In The Beginning \(The Big Picture Series\)](#)

Further Reflection

Read [Isaiah 53:4-12](#), [Mark 1:15](#), [Luke 22:19-20](#), [Matthew 16:18](#), [Luke 23:45](#).

Pray

God, thank you for creating us and your love for us. Thank you for the Bible and giving us the opportunity to get to know and relate to you more through it. Thank you for Jesus and giving him up so that we can have a relationship with you. Help us to wrestle with any questions we have or doubts that come into our mind about you and all that you teach us. Help us to know you and live our lives out of a relationship with you.