

Judeo-Christian Tradition

Essential Question: How did monotheistic religions contribute to the development of democracy in the United States?

- **Judaism**
- **Christianity**
- **Islam**
- **Legacy of Monotheistic Religions**
- **Renaissance and Reformation**

Judaism

- The religion of the Hebrews is called **Judaism**, and the first 5 books of the Hebrew Scriptures are called the **Torah**.
- Unlike groups around them the Jews were monotheists, who believed in one perfect, all knowing and all powerful God.
- Like the Greeks and Romans, the Jews had a written code of laws that God gave their prophet Moses about 1200 BCE in the form of the **Ten Commandments**.

Judaism

- **Prophets** were leaders and teachers who were believed by the Jews to be messengers from God.
- Jewish religion emphasizes each person's worth and **responsibility** to make moral choices.
- **Jewish law focuses on morality and ethics** and urges people to oppose injustice and oppression.

Christianity

- According to their holy book the Bible, Jesus of Nazareth was born around 6 BCE and began his ministry at the age of 30.
- His preaching contained many ideas from Jewish tradition, such as monotheism and the principles of the Ten Commandments.
- Jesus' ideas went beyond traditional morality, he emphasizes God's personal relationship with each person and the importance of love for God, neighbors, enemies, and themselves.
- He also taught God would establish an eternal kingdom and people who sincerely repented their sins would find life after death in this kingdom.

Christianity

- Jesus was crucified about 29 CE because he was viewed by the Romans as a political threat, and according to his followers rose from the dead 3 days later
- In spreading the teachings of Jesus, Paul establishes the religion of **Christianity**, which came from the Greek word *Christos* or savior.
- Paul stressed that Jesus was the son of God and had died for peoples sins, and declared Christianity a universal religion open to Jews and non-Jews alike.
- Rome aids the spread of Christianity by exiling the Jews (Diaspora) in 70 CE and later in 380 CE by adopting the Christian religion.

Islam

- ❑ Islam was another monotheistic religion that taught equality of all persons and individual worth.
- ❑ It developed in southwest Asia in the early 600's, and was based on the teachings of Muhammad.
- ❑ He emphasized the dignity and brotherhood of all human beings and unity of all people required a tolerance of different groups within the community.
- ❑ Muslims (followers of Islam) were required to offer help to those in need
- ❑ Rulers had to obey the same laws as those they ruled.

Legacy of Monotheistic Religions

- Several ideals crucial to the **shaping of a democratic outlook** emerged from the early monotheistic religions of southwest Asia.
 - 1) the duty of the individual and the community to combat oppression
 - 2) the worth of the individual
 - 3) the equality of people before God

Renaissance and Reformation

- By the **Middle Ages** (1000-1500) the **Roman Catholic Church** had developed from Christianity, becoming the most powerful institution in Europe, influencing all aspects of life.
- Beginning in the 14th Century, a movement called the **Renaissance** (rebirth) places renewed focus on classical (Greece and Rome) culture and role of the individual.
- **The Reformation**, lead by **Martin Luther**, divides Christianity into Protestantism and Catholicism, **furthering the spirit of questioning** that had begun during the Renaissance.
- Both the **Renaissance** and the **Reformation** promote ideas that are important in the development of democracy (importance of the Individual).