

Chapter 1 : How to Become a Rabbi: 9 Steps (with Pictures) - wikiHow

Reform Judaism in the Making, by Rabbi Sylvan D. Schwartzman, is the answer to this request. While intended primarily for adults, it may be used in the upper grades of high school. The differences between Orthodox, Conservative, and Reform or Liberal Judaism are explained.

Symbols Star of David, chai, hamsa, tree "It has been estimated that one-third of our Western civilization bears the marks of its Jewish ancestry. Through thousands of years of suffering, persecution, dispersion, and the occasional victory, Jewish religion and culture has been profoundly influential. Today, about 14 million people identify themselves as Jews, and nearly 3. Modern Judaism is a complex phenomenon that incorporates both a nation and a religion, and often combines strict adherence to ritual laws with a more liberal attitude towards religious belief. The central religious belief of Judaism is that there is only one God. Monotheism was uncommon at the time Judaism was born, but according to Jewish tradition, God himself revealed it to Abraham, the ancestor of the Jewish people. Judaism teaches that God took special care of the Hebrews who would later become the Jews. After rescuing them from slavery in Egypt, God revealed the Ten Commandments to Moses, and many more religious and ethical guidelines in the Torah "the Law". Many of the guidelines mitzvah emphasized ritual purity and the importance of remaining set apart from the surrounding polytheistic cultures. Aside from its staunch monotheism, Judaism has few essential beliefs. Jewish identity arises primarily from belonging to an ancient people and upholding its traditions. Dogma, while important, is secondary. Although the medieval thinker Rabbi Maimonides once enumerated " 13 Articles of Faith ," many Jews do not accept all these, and Jewish beliefs vary widely on theological matters such as human nature and the afterlife. Divisions within Judaism , known as "movements," have developed in modern times as varying responses to secularism and modernity. Orthodox Judaism is the most conservative group, retaining nearly all traditional rituals and practices. At the opposite end of the spectrum, Reform Jews retain their Jewish identity and some traditions but take a liberal approach to many Jewish beliefs and practices. Conservative Judaism lies in the middle of the spectrum, taking a moderate approach in its application of Judaism to the modern world. Hanukkah, historically a minor holiday, has become more prominent in the last century for Jews who live in areas that celebrate Christmas. The Sabbath, a day of rest and worship at the synagogue, is observed each Saturday. In Judaism, all days begin at sunset, so all holidays begin at sundown and end at sundown. At the first Sabbath after the birth of a child, the proud father is called forward in the synagogue to recite blessings for mother and child. Eight days after birth, baby boys are circumcised. Jewish wedding ceremonies incorporate many ancient traditions and symbolic gestures including the well-known breaking of glass , and divorces are obtained within the Jewish community. The deceased is treated with great respect and never left alone. The dead is then remembered and honored each year on the anniversary of death. In addition to these special days and ceremonies, the Jewish life is marked by regular religious observance. Each Saturday, Sabbath is observed by ceasing work and spending the day in worship at the synagogue and at home with family. The study of Torah and other Jewish scriptures is considered very important, and many Jewish children attend Hebrew school so they can study it in its original language. In everyday life, traditional Jews observe the laws of kashrut, eating only foods that God has designated "kosher.

Chapter 2 : Timeline for the History of Judaism

*Reform Judaism in the Making [Rabbi Sylvan D. Schwartzman] on calendrierdelascience.com *FREE* shipping on qualifying offers. Liberal Jews throughout the land have long felt the need for a popular account of the rise and development of Reform Judaism that would appeal to the average adult man and woman.*

Print 1, shares Rabbi Rick Jacobs at his installation as head of the Reform movement. Read on for more about the movement, its leadership, and its connections to Cincinnati, Detroit, Scarsdale, New York, and, yes, Mattoon, Illinois. Westchester Reform Temple in Scarsdale. Panken is a licensed commercial pilot and has a degree in electrical engineering from Johns Hopkins University. Jacobs, who stands 6-foot-4, is a former dancer and choreographer. Concomitantly, the movement has moved away from discouraging intermarriage and has focused on welcoming intermarried families. In , a Reform rabbinic task force recommended reaching out to the intermarried and adapting rituals to include non-Jewish family members. Today, most Reform rabbis perform interfaith weddings. However, Reform rabbis may marry non-Jews after graduation and face no sanction for doing so. Panken, the Hebrew Union College president, has indicated that a review of the longtime ban on ordaining intermarried rabbis may be in the works. The Reconstructionist Rabbinical College recently dropped its own ban on intermarried rabbinical students, becoming the first US Jewish denomination to make that decision. Conversion requirements and rituals vary. Immersion in a mikveh ritual bath is recommended but not required. Those who have undergone a Reform conversion must make a public declaration of commitment to the Jewish people, living life as a Jew and Jewish values. In synagogue conversion ceremonies, converts typically hold the Torah, recite the Shema prayer, are given a Hebrew name and receive a blessing. Between and , enrollment at Reform Jewish day schools fell by 19 percent to 3, students, according to the Avi Chai Foundation, which tracks such data. Though about one in 10 Reform Jewish children are enrolled in Jewish day schools including some at day schools not affiliated with Reform , about one-quarter are enrolled in some other Jewish educational program such as supplementary Hebrew school and about one-third take part in an organized Jewish youth program. With the Reform Jewish birthrate at 1. Synagogue attendance lags If you took a representative sample of Jews in synagogue on any given Shabbat, 13 percent would be Reform compared to 21 percent Conservative, 56 percent Orthodox and 8 percent with no denomination. Only 4 percent of Reform Jews say they attend religious services at least weekly, compared to 11 percent of American Jews overall. About 29 percent of Reform Jews say they believe in God with absolute certainty, compared to 41 percent of Conservatives and 89 percent of Orthodox. The smallest movement-affiliated synagogue? It has six members. Altogether, the Union for Reform Judaism has affiliated congregations â€” about 15 new ones since the last biennial two years ago, according to URJ officials. Reform synagogues are spread across the country. Approximately two-thirds of American Reform Jews live outside the Northeast: About half of new Reform rabbis are women The gender breakdown of newly ordained Reform rabbis is about these days, according to HUC. The first American female Reform rabbi, Sally Priesand, was ordained in , and the first Israeli woman to receive Reform ordination was Rabbi Naamah Kelman, in HUC also has cantorial alumni, including women, since graduating the first female cantor, Barbara Ostfeld, in

Chapter 3 : Chicago Tribune - We are currently unavailable in your region

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The early part of the story is told in the Hebrew Bible Old Testament. It describes how God chose the Jews to be an example to the world, and how God and his chosen people worked out their relationship. It was a stormy relationship much of the time, and one of the fascinating things about Jewish history is to watch God changing and developing alongside his people. The birth of the Jewish people and the start of Judaism is told in the first 5 books of the Bible. God chose Abraham to be the father of a people who would be special to God, and who would be an example of good behaviour and holiness to the rest of the world. God guided the Jewish people through many troubles, and at the time of Moses he gave them a set of rules by which they should live, including the Ten Commandments. From then on Jewish worship was focussed on the Temple, as it contained the Ark of the Covenant, and was the only place where certain rites could be carried out. The kingdom declines Around BCE, the kingdom fell apart, and the Jewish people split into groups. This was the time of the prophets. Around BCE the temple was destroyed, and the Jewish leadership was killed. Many Jews were sent into exile in Babylon. Although the Jews were soon allowed to return home, many stayed in exile, beginning the Jewish tradition of the Diaspora - living away from Israel. Rebuilding a Jewish kingdom The Jews grew in strength throughout the next years BCE, despite their lands being ruled by foreign powers. At the same time they became more able to practice their faith freely, led by scribes and teachers who explained and interpreted the Bible. In BCE the King of Syria desecrated the temple and implemented a series of laws aiming to wipe out Judaism in favour of Zeus worship. There was a revolt BCE and the temple was restored. The revolt is celebrated in the Jewish festival of Hannukah. But internal divisions weakened the Jewish kingdom and allowed the Romans to establish control in 63 BCE. In the years that followed, the Jewish people were taxed and oppressed by a series of "puppet" rulers who neglected the practice of Judaism. The priests or Sadducees were allied to the rulers and lost favour with the people, who turned increasingly to the Pharisees or Scribes. These were also known as Rabbis, meaning teachers. His followers came to believe he was the promised Messiah and later split away from Judaism to found Christianity, a faith whose roots are firmly in Judaism. Rabbinic Judaism The Rabbis encouraged the Jewish people to observe ethical laws in all aspects of life, and observe a cycle of prayer and festivals in the home and at synagogues. This involved a major rethink of Jewish life. Although the Temple still stood, its unique place as the focus of Jewish prayer and practice was diminished. Many synagogues had been founded in Palestine and right around the Jewish Diaspora. The most well known of the early teachers were Hillel, and his contemporary Shammai. The destruction of the Temple This was a period of great change - political, religious, cultural and social turmoil abounded in Palestine. The Jewish academies flourished but many Jews could not bear being ruled over by the Romans. During the first years CE the Jews twice rebelled against their Roman leaders, both rebellions were brutally put down, and were followed by stern restrictions on Jewish freedom. The first revolt, in 70 CE, led to the destruction of the Temple. This brought to an end the temple worship and is still perceived by traditional Jews as the biggest trauma in Jewish history. A second revolt, in CE, resulted in the death of hundreds of thousands of Jews, the enslaving of thousands of others, and the banning of Jews from Jerusalem - CE: Following the twin religious and political traumas, the academies moved to new centres both in Palestine and in the Diaspora. A sense of urgency had taken hold and it was considered vital to write down the teachings of the Rabbis so that Judaism could continue. Around CE, scholars compiled the Mishna, the collection of teachings, sayings and interpretations of the early Rabbis. The academies continued their work and several generations of Rabbis followed. Their teachings were compiled in the Talmud which expands on the interpretations of the Mishna and established an all-encompassing guide to life. The Talmud exists in two forms. The first was finalised around the 3rd century CE in Palestine, and the second and superior version was completed during the 5th century CE in Babylon. During this period Jews were allowed to become Roman citizens, but later were

forbidden to own Christian slaves or to marry Christians. In CE the Romans banned synagogue building, and barred Jews from official jobs. Despite an attempt to forcibly convert all Jews to Islam in CE, this golden age continued. At around this time the first Jews are recorded in Britain. The armies of the first Crusade attacked Jewish communities on their way to Palestine, especially in Germany. When the Crusaders captured Jerusalem they slaughtered and enslaved thousands of Jews as well as Muslims. Following the example of the Romans earlier, they banned Jews from the city. In Britain, the Jewish population increased, benefiting from the protection of Henry I. The bad times return The s were a seriously bad period. Jews were driven from southern Spain by a Berber invasion. Serious anti-Jewish incidents began to occur in Europe: Expulsions In England the Jews faced increasing restrictions during the Thirteenth Century, and in they were all expelled from England. Shortly afterwards the Jews were expelled from France. In the Jews in Spain suffered under the Spanish Inquisition, and in Jews were expelled from Spain altogether. The same thing happened in Portugal in

The Jewish form of mysticism, known as Kabbalah reached new heights with the publication in Spain of the Book of Splendour, which influenced Jewish Spirituality for centuries. History from to s Jews return to Britain This was a period of Jewish expansion. Jews were allowed to return to England and their rights of citizenship steadily increased. Jews were first recorded in America in Hassidism Poland and Central Europe saw the creation of a new Jewish movement of immense importance - Hassidism. The movement included large amounts of Kabbalic mysticism as well, and the way it made holiness in every day life both intelligible and enjoyable, helped it achieve great popularity among ordinary Jews. However it also led to divisions within Judaism, as many in the religious establishment were strongly against it. In Lithuania in Hassidism was excommunicated, and Hassidic Jews were banned from marrying or doing business with other Jews. Persecution in Central Europe Towards the end of the s Jews began to suffer persecution in central Europe, and in Russia they began to be restricted to living in a particular area of the country, called The Pale. This was Reform Judaism, which began in Germany and held that Jewish law and ritual should move with the times, and not be fixed. It introduced many changes to worship, and customs, and grew rapidly into a strong movement. It continues to flourish in Europe and the USA. Good news and bad news As the 19th century continued many countries gradually withdrew restrictions on Jewsâ€™ the UK allowed its Jewish citizens the same rights as others by s. But at the same time Jews came under increasing pressure in central Europe and Russia. There were brutal pogroms against Jews in which they were ejected from their homes and villages, and cruelly treated. Some of this persecution is told in the musical show Fiddler on the Roof. In Israel, Jewish culture was having a significant rebirth as the Hebrew language was recreated from a language of history and religion into a language of everyday life. The Jewish population of Britain increased by , in 30 years. However in the UK passed a law that slowed immigration to a mere trickle. The birth of Zionism The Zionist movement, whose aim was to create a Jewish state, was rooted in centuries of Jewish prayer and yearning to return to the land of Israel. Political Zionism began in the midth Century and towards the end of the century it gained strength as many Jews began to feel that the only way they could live in safety would be to have a country of their own. In the Balfour Declaration of , the British Government agreed that a national home for Jewish people should be established in Palestine. Following the First World War, the British governed the region in preparation for a permanent political arrangement. Over the next few years Jewish immigration increased and important institutions were founded such as the Israeli Chief Rabbinate, and the Hebrew University. The Holocaust Jewish history of the s and s is dominated by the Holocaust, the implementation on an industrial scale of a plan to wipe the whole Jewish people from the face of Europe. The plan was carried out by the Nazi government of Germany and their allies. During the Holocaust 6 million Jewish people were murdered, 1 million of them children. The events of the Holocaust have shaped Jewish thinking, and the thinking of other people about Jewish issues ever since. War crimes trials of those involved in the Holocaust continue to this day. The tragedy affected much of the religious thinking of Jews, as they try to make sense of a God who could allow such a thing to happen to his chosen people. The State of Israel The second defining Jewish event of the century was the achievement of the Zionist movement in the creation of the State of Israel in There had been strong and paramilitary opposition to British colonial rule for many years, and in the United Nations agreed a plan to partition the land between Jews and Arabs. In May the British Government

withdrew their forces. Immediately, the surrounding Arab States invaded and the new Jewish State was forced to fight the first of several major wars. Notable among these were the 6-day war in 1967 and the Yom Kippur war in 1973. The first steps towards a permanent peace came when Israel signed a peace treaty with Egypt in 1979, and with Jordan in 1994. For most of its history Israel has had an uneasy relationship with the Arab states that surround it, and has been greatly sustained by the help and support of the USA, where the Jewish community is large and influential. The 21st century began with great political uncertainty over Israel and its relationship with the Palestinian people, and this continues.

Chapter 4 : God In America: People: Isaac Mayer Wise | PBS

Includes bibliographical references (p.) and index.

The sacred texts of revealed religions may be eternal and unchanging, but they are understood and applied by human beings living in time. Christians believed not only that the Jews had misunderstood Scripture, thus justifying the Christian reinterpretation of Jewish Scripture, but also that the history of Judaism provides the key to an understanding of Judaism, for its primal affirmations appear in early historical narratives. Thus, the Bible reports contemporary events and activities for essentially religious reasons. The biblical authors believed that the divine presence is encountered primarily within history. Although other ancient communities also perceived a divine presence in history, the understanding of the ancient Israelites proved to be the most lasting and influential. The people of Israel believed that their response to the divine presence in history was central not only for themselves but for all humankind. Furthermore, God's "as person" had revealed in a particular encounter the pattern and structure of communal and individual life to this people. Claiming sovereignty over the people because of his continuing action in history on their behalf, he had established a covenant with them and required from them obedience to his teaching, or law Torah. This obedience was a further means by which the divine presence was made manifest—expressed in concrete human existence. Even the chosen community failed in its obligation and had to be summoned back, time and again, to its responsibility by the prophets—the divinely called spokespersons who warned of retribution within history and argued and reargued the case for affirmative human response. General observations Nature and characteristics In nearly 4,000 years of historical development, the Jewish people and their religion have displayed a remarkable adaptability and continuity. In their encounter with the great civilizations, from ancient Babylonia and Egypt to Western Christendom and modern secular culture, they have assimilated foreign elements and integrated them into their own social and religious systems, thus maintaining an unbroken religious and cultural tradition. Furthermore, each period of Jewish history has left behind it a specific element of a Judaic heritage that continued to influence subsequent developments, so that the total Jewish heritage at any given time is a combination of all these successive elements along with whatever adjustments and accretions have occurred in each new age. The various teachings of Judaism have often been regarded as specifications of the central idea of monotheism. One God, the creator of the world, has freely elected the Jewish people for a unique covenantal relationship with himself. This one and only God has been affirmed by virtually all professing Jews in a variety of ways throughout the ages. Jewish monotheism has had both universalistic and particularistic features. Along universal lines, it has affirmed a God who created and rules the entire world and who at the end of history will redeem all Israel the classical name for the Jewish people, all humankind, and indeed the whole world. The ultimate goal of all nature and history is an unending reign of cosmic intimacy with God, entailing universal justice and peace. This arrangement is designated a covenant and is structured by an elaborate and intricate law. Thus, the Jewish people are both entitled to special privileges and burdened with special responsibilities from God. As the prophet Amos 8th century bce expressed it: The universal goal of the Jewish people has frequently expressed itself in messianism—the idea of a universal, political realm of justice and peace. In one form or another, messianism has permeated Jewish thinking and action throughout the ages, and it has strongly influenced the outlook of many secular-minded Jews see also eschatology. Law embraces practically all domains of Jewish life, and it became the principle means by which Judaism was to bring about the reign of God on earth. It is a total guide to religious and ethical conduct, involving ritualistic observance as well as individual and social ethics. It is a liturgical and ethical way constantly expatiated on by the prophets and priests, by rabbinic sages, and by philosophers. Such conduct was to be performed in the service of God, the transcendent and immanent ruler of the universe, the Creator and the propelling force of nature, and the one giving guidance and purpose to history. According to Judaic belief, this divine guidance is manifested through the history of the Jewish people, which will culminate in the messianic age. Salo Wittmayer Baron Lou Hackett Silberman Periodization The division of the millennia of Jewish history into periods is a procedure frequently dependent on philosophical

predilections. This formulation could be theologically reconciled with the assumption that Christianity had been preordained even before the creation of the world. In the 19th century, biblical scholars moved the decisive division back to the period of the Babylonian Exile and the restoration of the Jews to the kingdom of Judah 6th–5th century bce. These theories, however, have been discarded by most scholars in the light of a more comprehensive knowledge of the ancient Middle East and the abandonment of a theory of gradual evolutionary development that was dominant at the beginning of the 20th century. Most Jews share a long-accepted notion that there never was a real break in continuity and that Mosaic-prophetic-priestly Judaism was continued, with only a few modifications, in the work of the Pharisaic and rabbinic sages well into the modern period. Even today the various Jewish groups—whether Orthodox, Conservative, or Reform—all claim direct spiritual descent from the Pharisees and the rabbinic sages. In fact, however, many developments have occurred within so-called normative or Rabbinic Judaism. In any event, the history of Judaism can be divided into the following major periods: Biblical Judaism 20th–4th century bce

The ancient Middle Eastern setting The Bible depicts the family of the Hebrew patriarchs—Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob—all early 2nd millennium bce—as having its chief seat in the northern Mesopotamian town of Harran, which then belonged to the Hurrian kingdom of Mitanni. From there Abraham, the founder of the Hebrew people, is said to have migrated to Canaan comprising roughly the region of modern Israel and Lebanon, which was a vortex of west Asian, Egyptian, and east Mediterranean cultures throughout the biblical period and later ages. From Canaan the Hebrew ancestors of the people of Israel named after the patriarch Jacob, also called Israel migrated to Egypt, where they lived in servitude; a few generations later they returned to occupy part of Canaan. The Hebrews were seminomadic herdsman and occasionally farmers. Their tribal structure resembled that of the West Semitic steppe dwellers known from the 18th-century-bce tablets excavated at the north-central Mesopotamian city of Mari; their family customs and law have parallels in the Old Babylonian and Hurro-Semite law of the early and middle 2nd millennium. The conception of a messenger of God that underlies biblical prophecy was Amorite West Semitic and also found in the tablets at Mari. Mesopotamian religious and cultural conceptions are reflected in biblical cosmogony, primeval history including the Flood story in Genesis 6: Egypt provides many analogues for Hebrew hymnody and wisdom literature. All the cultures among which the patriarchs lived had cosmic gods who fashioned the world and preserved its order, all had a developed ethical system expressed in law and moral admonitions, and all had elaborate religious rites and myths. Although plainer when compared with some of the learned literary creations of Mesopotamia, Canaan, and Egypt, the earliest biblical writings are so imbued with contemporary ancient Middle Eastern elements that the once-held assumption that Israelite religion began on a preliterate level must be rejected. Late-born amid high civilizations, the Israelite religion had from the start features characteristic of all the known religions of the area. Implanted on the land bridge between Africa and Asia, it was exposed to crosscurrents of foreign thought throughout its history. Abraham did not discover this God but entered into a new covenantal relationship with him, in which Abraham was promised the land of Canaan and numerous progeny. God fulfilled that promise, it is believed, through the actions of the Hebrew leader Moses 14th–13th century bce: Sinai, and brought them to the Promised Land. The Hebrew tradition itself, moreover, does not unanimously support even the more modest claim of the continuity of YHWH worship from Abraham to Moses. This lack of continuity is demonstrated in Exodus 6: Neither of these epithets is used in postpatriarchal narratives excepting the Book of Ruth. Other compounds with El are unique to Genesis: Whether the name of YHWH was known to the patriarchs is doubtful. Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden, oil painting by Titian, c. Their response is loyalty and obedience and observance of a cult. Circumcision was a distinctive mark of the cult community. Any flagrant contradictions between patriarchal and later mores have presumably been censored; yet distinctive features of the post-Mosaic religion are absent. Evidently not the same as the later religion of Israel, the patriarchal religion prepared the way for the later one through its familial basis, its personal call by the Deity, and its response of loyalty and obedience to him. Little can be said of the relation between the religion of the patriarchs and the religions of Canaan. Known points of contact between them are the divine epithets mentioned above. Like the God of the fathers, El, the head of the Ugaritic pantheon, was depicted as both a judgmental and a compassionate deity. Baal Lord, the aggressive

young agricultural deity of Ugarit , is remarkably absent from Genesis. Yet the socioeconomic situation of the patriarchs was so different from the urban, mercantile, and monarchical background of the Ugaritic myths as to render any comparisons highly questionable. The schematic character of this tradition does not impair the historicity of a migration to Egypt, an enslavement by Egyptians, and an escape from Egypt under an inspired leader by some component of the later Israelite tribes. To disallow these events, it can be argued, would make their centrality as articles of faith in the later religious beliefs of Israel inexplicable. Tradition gives the following account of the birth of the nation. At the Exodus from Egypt 13th century bce , YHWH showed his faithfulness and power by liberating the Israelites from bondage and punishing their oppressors with plagues and drowning them in the sea. At Sinai he made the Israelites his people and gave them the terms of his covenant, regulating their conduct toward him and each other so as to make them a holy nation. After sustaining them miraculously during their year trek in the wilderness, he enabled them to take the land that he had promised to their fathers, the patriarchs. Moses leading the children of Israel through the Red Sea; illustration from a German Bible, 15th century. He shapes the main institutions of Israel: Although Moses is compared to a prophet in various texts in the Pentateuch the first five books of the Bible , he is never designated as oneâ€”the term being evidently unsuited for so comprehensive and unique a figure. Mosaic religion The distinctive features of Israelite religion appear with Moses. It is impossible to determine what rulings go back to Moses, but the Decalogue, or Ten Commandments , presented in chapter 20 of Exodus and chapter 5 of Deuteronomy , and the larger and smaller covenant codes in Exodus From them the following features may be noted: He painted the work in This meant eschewing all other godsâ€”including idols venerated as suchâ€”and the elimination of all magical recourses. The worship of YHWH was aniconic without images ; even figures that might serve in his worship were banned, apparently because their use suggested theurgy the art or technique of influencing or controlling a god by fixing his presence in a particular place and making him accessible. Although there is a mythological background behind some cultic terminology e. Adoration of the Golden Calf, oil on canvas by Nicolas Poussin, c. The involuntary perpetual slavery of Hebrews was abolished, and a seven-year limit was set on bondage. The humanity of slaves was defended: Theft and harm to property were punished monetarily rather than by death. Moral exhortations called for solidarity with the poor and the helpless and for brotherly assistance to those in need. Since the goal of the Israelites was the conquest of a land, their religion had warlike features. Such stories are not necessarily the work of a later age; they reflect rather the impact of these victories on the actors in the drama, who felt themselves successful by the grace of God. A complex process of occupation, involving both battles of annihilation and treaty agreements with indigenous peoples, has been simplified in the biblical account of the wars of Joshua 13th century bce. Individual tribes made their way with varying success against the residue of Canaanite resistance. The Book of Judges , the main witness for the period, does not speak with one voice on the religious situation. Its editorial framework describes repeated cycles of apostasy , oppression, appeal to God, and relief through a champion sent by God. The individual stories, however, present a different picture. Apostasy does not figure in the exploits of the judges Ehud , Deborah , Jephthah , and Samson ; YHWH has no rival, and faith in him is periodically confirmed by the saviours he sends to rescue Israel from its neighbours. This faith is shared by all the tribes; it is owing to their common cult that a Levite from Bethlehem could serve first at an Ephraimite and later also at a Danite sanctuary. The religious bond, preserved by the common cult, enabled the tribes to work together under the leadership of elders or an inspired champion in time of danger or religious scandal. The many cultic figurines usually female found in Israelite levels of Palestinian archaeological sites also give colour to the sweeping indictments of the framework of the Book of Judges.

Chapter 5 : Lance J. Sussman - Wikipedia

NEW YORK (JTA) — Some 5,000 Reform Jews will gather November 15-17 in Orlando, Florida, for the biennial conference of the Union for Reform Judaism. The movement is led by a pilot and a dancer.

His father, Charles Sussman [6] was awarded a bronze star and other decorations for valor during World War II while serving in the 95th Infantry Division. She fled Nazi Germany and resettled in the United States in 1938 and her family escaped the following year. She has had a career as both a Jewish educator and a music educator. They have five children and two grandchildren. Sussman also has a sister Marcelle who is a journalist. In 1961, after only three years in college, he was elected to Phi Beta Kappa [9] and graduated cum laude with a BA in Religious Studies. Sarna, who is currently at Brandeis University. Early career[edit] From 1961 to 1965, while writing his doctoral dissertation, Sussman served as the rabbi of Temple Beth Shalom in Middleton, Ohio. In 1968, he was the chair of the Judaic Studies Department. While in Binghamton, Sussman also developed an exhibit for the University museum on Jewish migration and history in the southern tier of New York titled "Beyond the Catskills," and published a communal history by the same name in 1971. It was the fifth reform congregation in the United States. Einhorn began his American career in Baltimore, where ironically Sussman was raised, but was forced to move to Philadelphia because of his opposition to slavery. He later served as a chaplain for American forces under Col. Like Sussman, Korn was a prominent historian of the American Jewish experience and remembered for his classic study, *American Jewry and the Civil War*. In 1975 he became a member of the Board of Governors of Gratz College. He has served as an adviser to numerous public exhibitions at museums and other cultural institutions and been involved with many public television PBS programs. Rabbinic Platform of [edit] Between 1975 and 1978, Sussman was active in a national debate among Reform leaders over the direction of the Movement. In the magazine *Reform Judaism* published a draft of a new platform for the movement. In that debate Sussman offered numerous amendments to the proposed platform, many of which were adopted. The "Statement" was initially published in *Rabbi Judith S. Toward the Next Generation of Judaism*. In response to the proposed platform in *Reform Judaism* in 1978 Sussman joined a group of other rabbis in founding the Association for Progressive Judaism. We insist that morality is central to Judaism and this cosmic order confers ethical responsibilities on us as beings with the capacity to choose between good and evil. We are convinced that modern historical and scientific knowledge has far-reaching implications for our understanding of the universe, the evolution of religion, and the development of Judaism and that this knowledge calls on us to reexamine our presuppositions in every generation. A Reform Siddur, the new prayer book of the Reform Movement. His revised doctoral dissertation, *Isaac Leeser and the Making of American Judaism*, is the only modern biography of one of the most important American Jewish leaders in the antebellum and civil war eras. Writing in *American Jewish History*, [43] the major professional specialty journal for this subject, a reviewer noted: His use of primary sources is extensive. He has given talks throughout the United States as well as overseas. He writes for newspapers and on-line publications as well. CHOW worked with a number of religious organizations to fight hunger in the community. One site of distribution was Temple Concord where Sussman was the rabbi. Fetullah Gulen Gulen Movement. From 1985 to 1988 Sussman worked with the German government to bring three groups of high school students from Frankfurt to stay at homes of Jewish families affiliated with KI and similarly sent three groups of Jewish high school students from KI to Germany. In 1989 Sussman became a Trustee of the American Board of IsraAID founded in 1985, [62] an Israeli-based not-for-profit humanitarian aid organization that has been engaged in emergency medical and rescue efforts after disasters such as the earthquake in Haiti, tsunamis in Sri Lanka and Japan, and Syrian refugees in Jordan. Pulpit innovations[edit] Sussman has been highly innovative in his pulpit work combining art and high technology both for services and adult education. Keneseth Israel remodeled its 1,000-seat sanctuary to accommodate the new technological needs, a project requiring nearly one million dollars to complete. Sussman also developed a similar approach to Adult Education in the sanctuary by collaborating with a local digital artist, Joan Myerson Shrager. Jersey City, New Jersey. *Isaac Leeser and the Making of American Judaism*. Wayne State University Press.

Chapter 6 : BBC - Religions - Judaism: History of Judaism

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The Tanakh[edit] A number of verses in the Hebrew Bible Tanakh refer to prohibitions against the creation of various forms of images, invariably linked directly with idolatry. The strongest over-all source is based on what Judaism counts as the second of the Ten Commandments: Do not have any other gods before Me. Do not represent [such] gods by any carved statue or picture of anything in the heaven above, on the earth below, or in the water below the land. Do not bow down to [such gods] or worship them. I am God your Lord, a God who demands exclusive worship. Where My enemies are concerned, I keep in mind the sin of the fathers for [their] descendants, to the third and fourth [generation]. But for those who love Me and keep My commandments, I show love for thousands [of generations]. For instance, Leviticus Do not raise up a stone idol or a sacred pillar for yourselves. Do not place a kneeling stone in your land so that you can prostrate yourselves on it. I am God your Lord. Similar injunctions appear in Numbers Based on these prohibitions, the Hebrew prophets, such as Isaiah , Jeremiah , Amos , and others, preached very strongly against idolatry. In many of their sermons, as recorded in the biblical books bearing their names, the prophets regarded the use of religious images as a negative sign of assimilation into the surrounding pagan cultures of the time. The Torah permits drawing of humans as long as they are not used for idolatry. The Halakha[edit] Despite the semantic association with idols, Halakha "Jewish law" as taught by the Shulkhan Arukh "Code of Jewish Law" and practiced and applied by Conservative Judaism and Orthodox Judaism today, interprets the verses as prohibiting the creation of certain types of graven images of people, angels, or astronomical bodies, whether or not they are actually used as idols. The Shulkhan Arukh states: Astronomical models for scientific purposes are permitted under the category of "study. The prohibition is therefore seen as applying specifically to certain forms of sculpture and depictions of the human face. In keeping with this prohibition, some illustrations from the Middle Ages feature fantastic creatures—usually animal-headed humanoids , even when the depictions are quite clearly meant to be those of historical or mythological humans. Because such creatures as gryphons , harpies , sphinxes , and the phoenix do not actually exist, no violation of the prohibition is perceived in such depictions. This is based on the fact that the Second Commandment, as stated in Exodus, refers specifically to "anything in the heaven above, on the earth below, or in the water below the land. Some base this upon their understanding of the Talmud , and others based it upon Kabbalah. Additionally, there is one type of representation, namely, bas-relief or raised representation on a flat surface, that is particularly problematic. Emden ruled this violated the injunction against depictions. Furthermore, many hold that such representations in the synagogue either violate this injunction or are not permitted, as they give the appearance of violating this injunction. Although most Hasidic Jews object to having televisions in their homes, this is not related to prohibitions against idolatry, but, rather, to the content of network and cable programming. Hasidim of all groups regularly display portraits of their Rebbes , and, in some communities, the children trade "rabbi cards" that are similar to baseball cards. In both Hasidic and Orthodox Judaism , taking photographs or filming are forbidden on the Sabbath and Jewish holy days , but this prohibition has nothing to do with idolatry. Rather, it is related to the prohibition against working or creating on these days. In historical periods[edit] Crossing the Red Sea, from Dura Europos synagogue , with two Hands of God , 3rd century In practice, many Jews throughout history have either accepted more permissive interpretations of the prohibition, or partly ignored it. Many art historians have long believed that there was a tradition in antiquity, with no surviving examples, of luxury illuminated manuscript scrolls of books from the Tanakh among Hellenized Jews. The evidence for this is Christian works of the Late Antique and Early Medieval periods whose iconography is thought to derive from works in this tradition. Examples of the later works include the Joshua Roll and, more controversially, the Utrecht Psalter. Nonetheless, the discovery in of the 3rd century Dura-Europos synagogue in Syria came as a considerable surprise, as it has large areas of wall-paintings with figures of the prophets and others, and

narrative scenes. There are several representations of the Hand of God , suggesting that this motif reached Christian art from Judaism. However, some of these, notably that at Naaran in the West Bank , have had the living figures removed, leaving inanimate symbols such as the menorah intact. There is also evidence that from about new synagogue mosaics were aniconic. An alternative explanation for the removals is that they were done after the Muslim Conquest, and related to the decree of Caliph Yazid II in although this referred to Christian images. There are many later Jewish illuminated manuscripts from the Middle Ages, and some other works with human figures. The "Birds Head Haggadah " German, now in Jerusalem gives all the human figures the heads of birds, presumably in an attempt to mitigate any breach of the prohibition. In modern times[edit] Although, in biblical times, Jews were actively iconoclasts , physically tearing down and destroying idols of other religions located within their political jurisdiction, today there is more tolerance for other cultures. In the state of Israel , all religious sites, Jewish and non-Jewish alike, are protected by law. Even though Jewish Law teaches that idolatry is forbidden to all of humanity as one of the seven Noahide Laws , Jews today combat it through discussion, debate, and education, rather than the physical destruction of statues and shrines. However, most traditional Jews still follow the prohibitions against entering places of idolatry, and will not attend functions held in buildings where there are religious statues. Recent scholarship[edit] In a refutation of the belief in an aniconic Judaism, and more generally in an underestimation of Jewish visual arts, the historian of ideas Kalman Bland recently proposed that the phenomenon is a modern construction, and that "Jewish aniconism crystallized simultaneously with the construction of modern Jewish identities". Samuel Krauss wrote in As late as ten years ago it would have been absurd to speak about a Jewish art. Not only did he have to prove that such an art existed, he also had to prove that it could exist, as he showed that the idea that the prohibition of images would obstruct the development of such an art was mistaken, and even established it as an irrefutable fact that the art in wide areas was not prohibited insofar as no worship was associated with it.

Reform Judaism was the first of the modern interpretations of Judaism to emerge in response to the changed political and cultural conditions brought about by the Emancipation.

At this time, approximately , Jews are living in 43 settlements in Eretz-Israel. The adult Jews of the city are arrested and most are executed after refusing to convert. Thirty-one or 32 of the Jews are killed. The Jewish children are forcibly baptized. Jews are sometimes required to wear a badge; sometimes a pointed hat. Most Jews went to Germany and further east. This form of distinctive dress was an additon to badge Jews were forced to wear. He also forced Jews over the age of seven to wear an indentifying badge. An additional Jews are burned alive at the synagogue. They were only allowed to take what they could carry and most went to France, paying for thier passage only to be robbed and cast overboard by the ship captains. Some , Jews are forced to leave. An estimated five thousand Jews were killed before the king, Philip the Tall, admitted the Jews were innocent. Despite the pleas of innocence of Pope Clement VI, the accusations resulted in the destruction of over 60 large and small Jewish communities. The king also confiscated his great wealth. Germany, and confiscates their books. Later, he expelled the Jews of Strassburg after a community debate. King Wenceslaus refused to condemn the act, insisting that the responsibility lay with the Jews for going outside during the Holy Week. He extends this edict to Spanish Jewish refugees. Jews now only remain in Provence until and in the possessions of the Holy See. The Bull was withdrawn the following year, alleging that the Jews of Rome attained the Bull by fraud.

Chapter 8 : Aniconism in Judaism - Wikipedia

This new prayer book has been 15 years in the making - right after the last prayer book was published by the Reform Movement of North American Judaism, Paskoff said. "In a lot of ways, it was a.

Since , hundreds of women have enrolled in HUC. As the changes in the Reform movement paralleled social changes, its character as an American religious denomination made it popular with an increasingly Americanized Jewish community. Contemporary Trends Reform practice today, especially in the synagogue itself, is characterized by the partial restoration of a number of formerly abrogated rites and rituals. Ritual items eliminated by the Classical Reformers, such as the yarmulke, tallit, and even tefillin, have been brought back. But because of the concept of religious autonomy, individual congregations cannot and do not require congregants to wear any of these traditional prayer items. Rather, they are offered to those who find them religiously meaningful or who prefer to wear them as an expression of traditionalist nostalgia. This generates some incongruous and perhaps amusing situations. For example, it is not uncommon to find congregations where many of the women wear yarmulkes and tallitot, while most of the men sit bareheaded and bare shouldered. This is the converse of the norm in traditional synagogues, where all men wear yarmulkes, tallitot, and on weekday mornings tefillin, and women rarely do. The Orthodox Jew who wanders into a Reform sanctuary by mistake would either break out laughing or withdraw in shock and horror. Another dramatic trend has been the move away from a formal style of worship and music toward more jubilant and enthusiastic prayer. The formalized Classical Reform service, which could uncharitably be called sterile, no longer impresses many with its dignity and majesty. Younger people have grown up with a different aesthetic. Yoffie , the president of the UAHC since , inherited a movement that had grown substantially in numbers yet was perceived as having fundamental problems. Yoffie moved quickly and boldly to address these challenges, taking advantage of the new enthusiasm for spirituality and launching a systematic campaign to rebuild the entire Reform movement. He initiated a Jewish literacy campaign, which encouraged every Reform Jew to read at least four books with Jewish content every year. Yoffie has only begun the process of reorienting the movement to meet the sociological challenges that Reform Judaism faces in contemporary America. This restating of Reform religious beliefs generated a firestorm of controversy in and Although the CCAR at its annual conference in Pittsburgh in May eventually passed a revised version called A Statement of Principles for Reform Judaism, supporters found it severely watered down, while Classical Reformers viewed it as a betrayal of the Reform legacy in America. Despite a year-and-a-half of conflict over this issue, the values that inspired people to join the Reform movement have kept them from splitting off or leaving altogether. Although many remain persuaded that Reform Jews have no strong religious beliefs, the movement has created and propagated a religious vision that remains compelling after years. It owes its success to its ability and willingness to respond theologically to changing times. The Reformers argued that if the Sages developed specific laws as a response to historical conditions, then halakhah could be changed or even abrogated. The Reform movement thus viewed halakhah, Jewish law, as no longer obligatory. Yet there was never complete agreement over how to relate to ritual observance. By the middle of 19th century, a wide spectrum of opinion existed on the issue. The historical school, which developed into the Conservative movement, argued that although halakhah might develop over time, it nevertheless remained binding. The historical school developed innovative religious approaches as well. The main difference " a significant one " is that the historical school attempted to show that halakhah evolved in order to justify ritual change on the basis of contemporary needs. The Conservative movement viewed itself as faithful to the halakhic process. But Reform thinkers understood the historical changes within Judaism as far more radical. According to a Reform understanding of the history of Judaism, the religion has evolved in a revolutionary fashion at several key points in its history. These changes were not simply adaptations of a minor nature, but dramatic developments that marked huge jumps in both belief and practice. Reform theologians believed that generations in different time periods fashioned a Judaism that suited their contemporary religious sensibilities. But if Jewish law was not obligatory, then what was the purpose of Judaism? Many 19th-century rationalists believed that human beings

possessed an autonomous sense of ethics and morals. The rationalist philosophers argued that religion imposed an externally derived legal system on individuals that prevented them from exercising their autonomous will. Such reasoning could lead one to conclude that the essence of Judaism is ethics rather than law. That explains why so much of the early Reform literature stressed abstract ethical lessons and avoided describing ritual acts. Revelation became a bit tricky, because one needed autonomy to choose the ethical path. If God made all the decisions and issued all the commands, then the individual would not have autonomous choice. Therefore, Reform thinkers developed the notion of man and God as partners in an unfolding process of continuing revelation. The rejection of halakhah as a legal system meant that every individual practice had to be justified on its own merits, which produced widespread inconsistencies and contradictions. For example, the halakhah requires all Jews to fast not only on Yom Kippur, but also on Tisha be-Av, a fast day commemorating the destruction of the First and Second Temples and other catastrophic events, and four additional minor fast days. But if halakhah no longer bound Reform Jews, then they no longer had to abstain from eating even on the holiest fast day of the year. Most pulpit rabbis seem to have chosen to ignore the glaring problem of ritual inconsistency, particularly in the private sphere. While Reform synagogues developed a standard liturgy and a formalized ritual, no corresponding code detailed how Reform Jews should live their lives outside the synagogue; each person had to decide what rituals, if any, remained meaningful. Perhaps the rabbis preferred not to interfere with the private habits of their congregants. Some theologians, however tried to provide an ethical justification for specific observance. In recent years, many Reform Jews have come to a new appreciation of the importance of ritual in religious life, which some Orthodox observers misinterpret as a return to halakhic observance. Rather, these Reformists find that specific traditional practices provide spiritual meaning for the individual. And that is, at heart, what the Reform movement stands for. Innovation developed in response to local needs and took into account no overarching theological system or broad religious blueprint. Nevertheless, Reform thinkers had to develop a system for interpreting the tradition. One of their most important concepts was to differentiate between biblical and talmudic laws. In traditional Judaism, the Sages differentiated laws that were de-oraita, from the Torah, from laws that were de-rabbanan, from the rabbis. But both types of laws were obligatory to the same degree, and one could not justify nonobservance by pointing out that a given law was "only" de-rabbanan rather than de-oraita. What was important to the Reformers was to develop a religious system that synchronized Jewish belief with contemporary trends yet retained enough particularistic elements to distinguish their religion as a form of Judaism. To this end, they wanted to eliminate laws and practices that would prevent or restrict their social and economic integration into the host society. Writing in the 1950s and 60s, American Jewish sociologist Marshall Sklare argued that the Jewish rituals most likely to endure were those capable of being redefined in modern, universal terms. A ritual would command widespread observance only if it did not bring with it social isolation or the adoption of a unique lifestyle. The message of the ritual had both to accord with the religious culture of the larger community and to provide a Jewish alternative to it. These usually focused on children and were performed infrequently so as not to be overly burdensome. Although it could be redefined in modern terms, for instance, keeping kosher would still demand a relatively high degree of social isolation as well as the adoption of a unique lifestyle. Nevertheless, some Reform Jews remained observant of the kosher laws, at least to some degree. Reformers emphasized the prophetic ideals of justice and righteousness, arguing that these universalistic values formed the essence of Judaism. The Pittsburgh Platform, which differentiated moral and ritual laws and became the "principle of faith" for Classical Reform Judaism, stressed that most of the ancient laws were not to be observed. Classical Reform was not only a system of beliefs, but also an aesthetic approach to religious practice. Although as immigrant Jews Americanized, they wanted their synagogues to reflect American norms, even in Europe many had seen the Orthodox way of worship as disruptive and undignified. Many of the central European Jews not only believed that houses of worship should be places of propriety but also wanted their synagogue worship to reflect American norms and standards; they borrowed structural and stylistic features from local Protestant churches, copying their architecture, seating arrangements, musical styles, and so forth. Reform Jews also made a number of ritual changes solely on the basis of what they considered the most dignified approach. A Classical Reform aesthetic slowly developed

into a compulsory system of ritual that replaced the halakhic system. While some argued against all boundaries, others tried to develop a post-halakhic justification for some form of Jewish legal authority. Reform thinkers understood that the freedom of action they advocated could result in unintended consequences. If individuals could make their own decisions over what to observe, then what would stop those individuals from observing nothing at all? Indeed, there were those who used the Reform movement to justify apathy and even apostasy. But no obvious solution presented itself. The manual went much further than any previous CCAR publication in urging Reform Jews to perform certain mitzvot – to light Shabbat candles, to recite or chant the kiddush, and to avoid working or performing housework on the Sabbath. This watershed publication led to additional efforts to "return to tradition. Most Reform Jews believe that religion in general, and Judaism specifically, is very much a human institution. They believe that it is impossible to know with absolute certitude what God wants from us. Certainly, behaving ethically is necessary for people of all faiths. But we cannot know what ritual behavior God expects from us. An adherent of Sherwin T. Wine had established the small movement in , along with the first Humanistic Jewish congregation, the Birmingham Temple, in Michigan. Beth Adam had grown unhappy with the organization, in particular, as Barr explained, because the group had begun ordaining its own leaders. After about 10 years of belonging to no national organization Barr and the congregation felt the need to be in closer touch "with the issues and concerns of the wider Jewish community. Gunther Plaut wrote that its "elision of God" means the congregation "does not admit of Covenant or commandments"; while the Reform movement can accept individuals who may be agnostic or even atheist, it cannot accept congregations whose declared principals contradict the religious beliefs of Reform Judaism. Three rabbis on the Responsa Committee disagreed with the majority view, arguing that to accept Beth Adam into the URJ would not necessarily imply that the Reform movement accepts its theological views. The debate continued through the early s. At the end of its deliberations, the board voted to 13 with four abstentions to reject the application. The Beth Adam decision meant that while congregations still had the right to adopt the prayer book of their choice or write one of their own, there were theological limits on what could legitimately be regarded as Reform liturgy. The vote also reaffirmed that the drive for inclusion did not obligate the Reform movement to accept every group from every background espousing every ideology. Yoffie, a Reform rabbi and the president of the URJ, is leading the restructuring and revitalization of the Reform movement. When Yoffie took office the Reform movement had to either make dramatic changes or watch its fortunes fade rapidly. Large numbers in the movement have been receptive to his proposals. New approaches to study, worship, and ritual practice are being implemented. Yoffie then outlined a plan to reform Reform. The URJ leadership has prepared a series of initiatives that taken together constitute "a Reform revolution.

Chapter 9 : Judaism - ReligionFacts

Zach is committed to everything he does, always striving to perform to the best of his abilities and is ready to proudly represent the voice of Reform Jewish teens across America. 10/28/ Topics.