

# What is Judaism?

## Jewish Diaspora Mapping Activity

*Middle School (Grades 6-8)*

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### Middle School (Grades 6-8)

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Period: \_\_\_\_\_

### Directions

Use the information from the video to complete this mapping activity. You will show the origins of Judaism and how Jewish communities spread around the world.

### Part 1: Map Your Understanding

On the world map provided (or use a digital mapping tool), complete the following tasks:

#### Step 1: Mark the Origin

- **Locate and label:** The Land of Israel (ancient Judea)
- **Mark with a star:** Jerusalem
- **Color:** Use one color for the original homeland

## Step 2: Show the Diaspora

- **Draw arrows** showing the movement of Jewish people from Israel to different regions after 70 AD
- **Use different colors** for different communities:
  - **Blue:** Ashkenazi Jews (Europe)
  - **Red:** Sephardi Jews (Spain and North Africa)
  - **Green:** Mizrahi Jews (Middle East)
  - **Yellow:** Ethiopian Jews (Ethiopia)
  - **Purple:** Indian Jews (India)

## Step 3: Label Regions

Write the names of the Jewish communities in their appropriate regions on your map.

## Step 4: Create a Map Key/Legend

In the box below or on your map, create a key that explains:

- What each color represents
- What the star symbol means
- What the arrows show

## Part 2: Map Analysis Questions

**1. How far did Jewish communities spread from their original homeland?**

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**2. Look at the different regions where Jewish communities developed. What geographical features (oceans, mountains, continents) separate these communities?**

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**3. Based on the map, why do you think the video describes Jewish communities as having a "global" presence?**

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**4. Despite being separated by such great distances, all these communities maintained a Jewish identity. What might have helped them stay connected? (Think about practices, beliefs, and traditions mentioned in the video)**

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**Part 3: Geographic Connections**

**5. The video mentions that synagogues around the world are designed to face Jerusalem during prayer. Using your map, explain why this is significant.**

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**6. Jewish holidays like Passover and Sukkot are based on the seasons of the Land of Israel. How might celebrating these holidays feel different for Jews living in different climates around the world? (For example, someone in Russia vs. someone in Ethiopia)**

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### **Extension Challenge**

**Research Task:** Choose ONE of the Jewish communities you marked on your map (Ashkenazi, Sephardi, Mizrahi, Ethiopian, or Indian Jews). Research one unique tradition, food, or custom that developed in that community.

**Community**

**Chosen:**

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**Unique**

**tradition/food/custom:**

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**How does this show cultural adaptation while maintaining Jewish identity?**

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## **Map Key Template**

Create your map key here if not doing it directly on your map: