**The Essence Of Judaism**

The Essence of Judaism Judaism is one of the most widely practiced religions in the world. It is also the oldest monotheistic religion, originating at least 3,000 years ago. There are three different kinds of Judaism, Orthodox, Conservative, and Reform. Orthodox is the most traditional and had changed very little over the years. Conservative has changed to fit the times without losing much tradition. Reform Judaism is most modern of the three. No matter which kind of Judaism someone practices, in order to be considered Jewish they must practice Jewish traditions, observe Jewish law, and believe in God. Since Judaism is so old, it has many important traditions, many of which are still practiced today. One of the first things that comes to mind when someone thinks of Judaism is the synagogue. In the Orthodox synagogues, only Hebrew is spoken, while in the Conservative and Reform synagogues English is also spoken. The synagogue is a place of worship for the Jewish community. Men used to be the only ones who went to the synagogue, while women stayed at home and raised the family, but now both usually go. One of the most important Jewish traditions is the Sabbath. The Sabbath begins at sundown on Friday, and ends at sundown on Saturday. During the Sabbath no work is permitted. The entire day is devoted to family and prayer. Another part of Jewish life is kosher food. There are strict rules for preparing food, as well as rules on what can and cannot be eaten. Along with traditions, there are certain ceremonies associated with the Jewish religion. One of these ceremonies is the Bar Mitzfa. A Bar Mitzfa is a passage into adulthood. It is held on the Saturday following a Jewish boy’s thirteenth birthday. After his Bar Mitzfa, a Jewish boy is expected to observe Jewish laws, and is now responsible for his own actions. In Reform Judaism, girls have an equivalent ceremony called a Bat Mitzfa. There are many important Jewish holidays. No work is permitted on any holiday, and most involve one or more visits to the synagogue. Rosh Hashanah is the Jewish New Year, which lasts eight days. The last day is Yom Kippur, which is one of the most important days of the year. Hanukkah is a minor holiday, but probably the most widely known. Hanukkah lasts for eight days to commemorate the eight days for which the oil for one day lasted. Another holiday is Passover, which celebrates the Jew’s liberation for slavery in Egypt. Passover is a very unique holiday because it is mainly celebrated in the home instead of the synagogue. All Jews celebrate the Jewish holidays, no matter if they are Orthodox, Conservative, or Reform. All Jews must observe Jewish law. The most important laws are the Ten Commandments, which were given to Moses by God. They tell man’s duties towards God and his neighbor. In addition to the Ten Commandments, Jews have 613 more laws to follow. These laws are not only religious laws, but also civil laws. Many of the laws are not practical today, and just aren’t needed anymore, but most are still followed. All Jews are supposed to follow the laws as closely as they can. It is very important for all Jews to believe in God. They believe that God created everything in the universe. Jews believe that God is everywhere and knows everything. They believe that when they die, God will judge them, and either be rewarded or punished for how they lived their life. One of the most important aspects of Judaism is the belief in God. In conclusion, Judaism is a religion practiced by many people all over the world. There are many traditions associated with Judaism, Jews have to follow certain laws, and most importantly they must believe in one God. All of these things put together makes someone Jewish.