

Unity and Diversity in Judaism

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Faith to Faith, Face to Face

Agenda

- Historical Overview
- Definitions
- Streams of Judaism

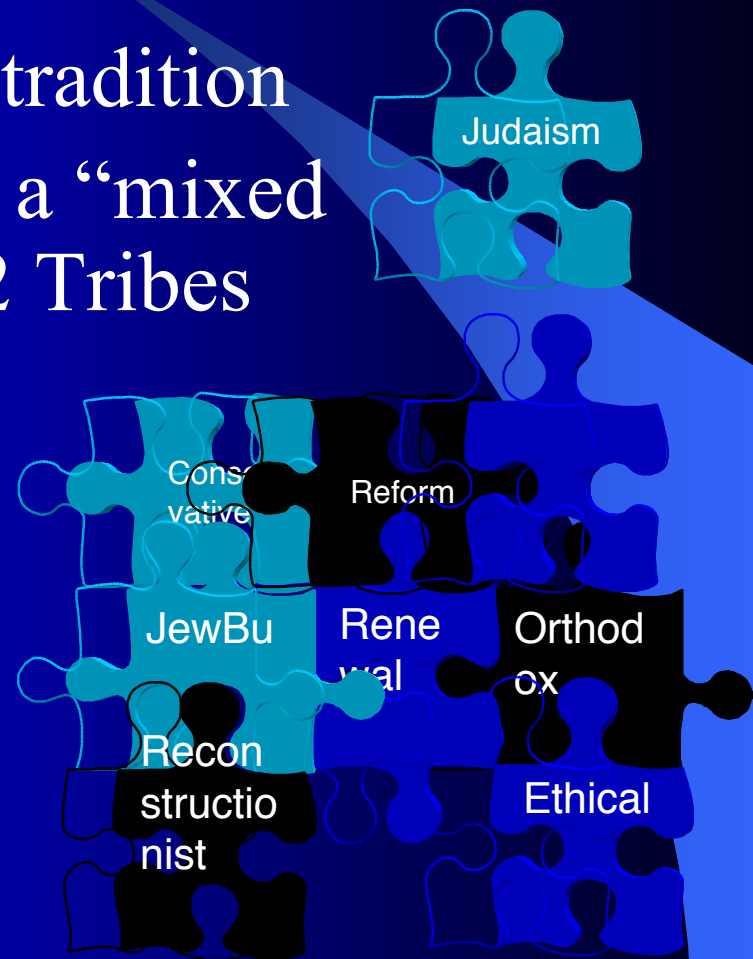
A Story for Sukkot

- The Lulav and the Etrog
- Symbol of our unity and diversity



Historical Overview

- Judaism is a 5,000 year tradition
- Leaving Egypt we were a “mixed multitude”, a band of 12 Tribes
- LOTS of opinions
- No one source of truth



Temple Period Times

- Saducees, Pharisees and Essenes
- Just the tip of the iceberg
- 70 sects

Talmud: Recording our Arguments

- Written and Oral Torah
- Rabbi Akiva, 70 interpretations of Scripture
- Rabbis Shammai and Hillel



Expulsion and Exile

- Regional differences
- Ashkanasi and Sephardic
- German and Russian
- Chassidic and Mitnagim

Maimonidis 13 Principles of Faith

- Jews don't have a creed of beliefs
- Yes we do.
- No we don't
- I believe with perfect faith...

Vocabulary

- Orthodox
- Reform
- Conservative
- Reconstructionist
- Post- or Trans-denominational

Table of Beliefs

- What do we have in common?
 - God
 - Torah
 - Israel

Where are the differences?

- What is the origin of Scripture
 - Was it given by G-d at Mount Sinai and recorded by Moses?
 - Was it divinely inspired and written down by humans?
 - Is it infallible?
- How then do we understand “commandment”?
- How do changes happen?

Unity? Some say tomato and some say tomaso

- Klal Yisrael, the whole of the people of Israel
- Am Yisrael, the people of Israel

Edmund Flegg

- I am a Jew because the faith of Israel demands of me no abdication of the mind.
- I am a Jew because the faith of Israel requires of me all the devotion of my heart.
- I am a Jew because in every place where suffering weeps, the Jew weeps.
- I am a Jew because the word of Israel is the oldest and the newest.
- I am a Jew because the promise of Israel is the universal promise.
- I am a Jew because for Israel, the world is not complete we are completing it.
- I am a Jew because Israel places humanity and its unity above the nations and above Israel itself.
- I am a Jew because, above the image of humanity, image of the divine Unity, Israel places the unity which is divine.