

Inclusive Judaism

Student Resource



Heritage:

Mizrachi/ Sephardi Communities

- Sephardi Jews have their ancestry in Spain and North Africa. Mizrahi Jews have their ancestry in Middle Eastern countries, including Iraq, Syria and Yemen.
- Both communities traditionally use Torah with hard cases, originally to protect the Torah from the heat in their ancestral countries. Now, in Britain many communities continue to use this style of Torah.
- Based on the proximity these communities had to the Arabic world, there are many similar connections with Islam. Their kippot (skullcaps) resemble the Muslim kufi hats, and many Mizrahi Jews speak Arabic, or a Judeo-Arabic language.

Did you know?

There is no one way to be Jewish. Jewish people live all around the world, and have many different ways of being Jewish. You can be a Black and Jewish, Asian and Jewish and much more. Also, depending what type of Jewish community you are part of, your Judaism may look different.



Sexuality: Liberal Judaism and the LGBTQ+ Community

Britain's Liberal Judaism Movement was one of the very first religious groups to advocate for LGBTQ+ rights in the UK, publishing a guideline for LGBTQ weddings before they were legalised. Liberal prayer books have adapted their traditional blessings to have gender-neutral language. Instead of referring to G-d by masculine pronouns, gender fluid pronouns are used.

Gender: Women and the Streams

- The Masorti Community (known as the Conservative Community in America) sits neatly in between the Orthodox and Reform Streams. This community takes the traditional approach to the religion like the Orthodox, but is based on a fundamental egalitarianism—with women leading worship and mixed congregations.



Race: Black and Brown Jews

- The Jewish people are an ethnoreligious group that stretches across the globe. From England to Ethiopia, Italy to India and Brazil to Bulgari, there are Jewish people all around the world.
- The Beta Israel Community is an ancient Jewish community from Ethiopia. As the community did not have much relationship with the Western world, they practiced all of the traditions and practices from the Torah—but not the Talmud and other Jewish texts. This means, historically they did not celebrate Jewish festivals such as Purim and Hanukah. They do, however, have special Ethiopian Jewish Festivals, namely, Sigd—a festival that celebrates the Torah and their relationship with the Holy Land.