

The Druze are often considered part of the Islamic religion because they believe in Allah as their God. However, their teachings are different that they are separate from the Muslim majority of the Middle East. Druze contains elements of Judaism and Christianity as well as Greek philosophy.

The Druze do not allow people to convert to or away from the religion. They must accept all Druze beliefs, deny other religious beliefs, avoid unbelievers, and maintain unity with other Druze.

In the State of Israel the Druze have official recognition as a separate religious community with its own religious court system. They serve in the Israeli army and vote in Israeli elections. However, the Druze living in the Golan Heights consider themselves Syrian and refuse to collaborate with the Israeli state.

An Arab is someone whose native language is Arabic. The word Arab refers to Arabic-speaking people who live around the world. In the early 21st century, there were more than 100 million Arabs throughout the world.

The religion of Islam brought Arabs together beginning in the early ad 600s. Because Islam's holy book (the Koran) is written in Arabic, that language soon was used by all who practiced the religion.

Judaism is the oldest of the world's four biggest monotheistic religions (religions with only one god). It's also the smallest, with only about 15 million followers around the world.

Jewish history begins with the covenant established between God and Abraham around 1812 BC (over **3,800** years ago), during the Bronze Age, in the Middle East.

The laws and teachings of Judaism come from the Torah, the first five books of the Hebrew Bible and oral traditions. Some of these were first oral traditions and later written in the Mishnah, the Talmud, and other works.

The Torah is the most important holy book of Judaism.

The Land of Israel is holy in Judaism. A Jewish belief is that God created the Earth from Mount Moriah in Jerusalem in the Land of Israel, and He is always closest to this land. Jews believe that this land is where God told the Jewish people to build a society to serve Him, and many *mitzvot* (commandments) in the Torah are about the Land of Israel.