Comparing Three Religions of the Middle East

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|  | Christianity | Islam | Judaism |
| God | -The one God of Abraham-Monotheistic-Another name is Yaweh-Jesus Christ-Three parts (Trinity) – Father, Son, and Holy Spirit | -The one God of Abraham-Monotheistic- Allah (Arabic for God)- Allah spoke to Muhammad | -The one God of Abraham-Monotheistic-God’s Hebrew name is *Adonai*-God made a Covenant with Abraham |
| Holy Book | -Bible  - Old Testament – History and Law - New Testament – Jesus’ life and teachings- Written in most languages | - Koran/Qur’an is written in Arabic- Includes God’s revelations to Muhammad | - TeNaKh 🡪 three parts- The Torah is the most important- Written in Hebrew-Tells stories and establishes laws |
| Key Beliefs | - Goal is to achieve salvation- Eternal life in heaven- Jesus Christ died and was resurrected- Follow Jesus’ teachings and participate in sacraments | - Muhammad is God’s last prophet- Hebrews descended from Isaac and Muslims descended from Ishmael- Jesus was only a prophet-Abraham’s covenant- Mecca is the center of Islam | - God made Earth and rested on the 7th day (Sabbath/Shabbat)-Live a good/moral life and follow the commandments of the Torah-Eat Kosher foods-Pass on traditions to children-Read and follow *Talmud* |
| Practices & Rituals | - Sacraments – sacred ceremonies- Baptism – introduction into the church- Communion – the Lord’s Supper (His last meal)- Christmas, Easter, Good Friday, Ash Wednesday | The Five Pillars1. Declaration of Faith2. Prayer 5x per day3. Giving to the needy4. Fasting during Ramadan5. Hajj – Pilgrimage to Mecca, Saudi Arabia | -Shabbat, Hanukah, Yom Kippur (fasting), Passover (feasting), Rosh Hashanah, Sukkot-Lighting candles-Give to the needy-Eat Kosher foods-Kippah/Yarmulka |
| Worship Services | - Church on Sundays- Pray, sing, and read from the Bible-Experience the sacraments-Recite beliefs- Worship is led by the Priest/Minister- Priest/Minister gives a sermon (lesson/speech) | - Go to Mosque any day of the week for prayer-Friday prayer at noon is the most important-Imam (religious leader) leads prayer and gives a sermon (religious lesson/speech)-Mosques have minarets (towers) used to call people to pray | - Prayer and song-Meet at Synagogue on Friday evenings and Saturday mornings-Market Days – worship on weekdays-Special rituals with Torah-Rabbi gives a sermon (lesson/speech) |
| Sects/Divisions | - Roman Catholic- Orthodox- Protestant (Methodist, Episcopal, Lutheran, Baptist, etc.) | -Sunni – 90% of Muslims-Shi’a – 10% of Muslims | -Orthodox -Conservative-Reform-Special reverence for Jerusalem |