

Sunday Morning Worship

“Our Living Tradition”

Entering Music 9:15am – 9:20am

Chalice Lighting 9:20 – 9:22

Song 9:22-9:25

Story – Harry Potter and Telling History 9:25 – 9:32

In our next series of classes we are going to be learning about the ancient stories of the Jewish people. Those stories are found in the Bible. The Bible is a thick book with very tiny print so not many people have read the whole Bible. The part of the Bible we are going to be learning about is the 1st half that tells a lot of the stories of the Jewish people and their heroes.

The other book I have in my hand is Harry Potter and the Sorcerer’s Stone. How many of you have read this book or seen the movie? Harry Potter and the Sorcerer’s Stone is like the parts of the Bible we are going to learn about because they both tell stories about heroes, they both tell stories that involve some amazing events, and they both have special messages in their stories.

Let’s start with the beginning of both books because there is something about the way they begin that is the same. Now, I’ll bet a lot of you know how the Harry Potter story starts so I’m going to start with the harder one and ask if anyone knows how the Bible begins.

Bible begins with a bunch of creation stories that happen many years before all the rest of the stories in the Bible which tell the story of this group of nomadic tribes that eventually became a nation. Harry Potter begins with the story of what happened to Harry as a baby before all the rest of the stories that tell about how he became a successful wizard.

Another thing that is the same about the two books is that they both tell amazing stories about the people in the book. Who can tell me something that is amazing that happens in the Harry Potter story that you don’t see around here every day.

In the Bible, there’s a story about a man who waves his rod, which is like a large magic wand and he parts the waters of a giant sea so people can walk through.

In the Bible, there’s a story about someone who lives for three days in the belly of a giant fish.

In the Bible, there’s a story about a snake that talks to one of the characters too.

In the Bible, there’s a story about man who built a giant boat and put all the animals on the boat to save them from a flood.

In the Bible, there’s a story about how God created the whole world just by speaking.

But, what do the stories of the Hebrews have to do with the Unitarian Universalist Principles we just learned about during the last few months. To tell THAT story, I’m going to need your help.

Dates 9:32 – 10:00

2000 BCE Various Tribes of wandering people living in an area called the Fertile Crescent around the Mediterranean Sea begin to form stories about their God and their tribes. Different tribes call God by many names – Yahweh, Elohim, El Elyon, El Shaddai. Some of the people that they create stories about are Adam and Eve, Cain and Abel, Noah, Abraham and Sarah, Jacob and Rebecca, and Joseph and his brothers. Eventually, several of these tribes are forced to move to Egypt.

1290 BCE Moses leads a group of people from those tribes out of Egypt and they wander around in the desert for 40 years. While they are wandering, they receive special instructions from God at Mt. Sinai and they learn that their God is called Yahweh and that they have been specially chosen by Yahweh. They eventually came to a place they called “The Promised Land” because they believe Yahweh has promised it to them.

1250 BCE The time of the Judges – over a period of 200 years, the group of tribes eventually create a single nation called Israel. The peak of this time is the time of King David and King Solomon during which they built a great temple in Jerusalem.

930 BCE The Kingdom divides into two kingdoms called Israel in the north and Judah in the South. Some of the oldest stories in the Bible begin to be collected. Some of the stories are different depending on which kingdom they came from.

722 BCE Israel is conquered by the Assyrians. Judah survives as a weak nation subject to the power of Assyria to the north. Many of the people from Israel flee to Judah where some of the different stories start to get combined. The Books of Genesis and Exodus are starting to come together. Deuteronomy probably written during this time.

587 BCE The Temple in Jerusalem is destroyed and Judah is conquered by the Assyrians. Many of Judah’s leaders flee to Babylon during a period known as the Babylonian Exile. Probably much of Numbers and Leviticus was written during this time of Exile as an explanation of living out the laws and traditions even when separated from the Temple.

539 BCE The Persians conquer the Assyrians and the Jews return to Jerusalem but they are governed by the Persians.

332 BCE Alexander the Great conquers the Persians and the Jews are now ruled by a series of Greek rulers.

175 BCE The Maccabees fight for independence and win a limited freedom for Judah for about 100 years.

63 BCE The Romans gain control of the near east including Jerusalem and reassert power over Judah. Judaism becomes more a part of the Greek and Roman world around them.

- 4 BCE Jesus is born.
- 25 CE Jesus gathers a group of Jewish followers to reform Judaism and its Temple practices.
- 29 CE Jesus dies and the followers of Jesus divide into many different communities.
- 36 CE A man named Paul of Tarsus converts to Christianity and begins creating communities in many cities.
- 50 CE Paul begins writing letters to the communities that he created. Gets in an argument with James and several other Christian leaders about what a person has to do to be a Christian.
- 55 CE Many people are circulating stories about Jesus, some written down, some spoken.
- 75 CE Gospel of Mark that tells a story about Jesus' life is written down.
- 85 CE Gospels of Matthew and Luke and the book of the Acts of the Apostles are written.
- 100 CE Gospel of John is written.
- 150 CE Letters claiming to have been written by Paul begin circulating, establishing various practices of a Church with leaders called Bishops
- 314 CE Having converted to Christianity, Emperor Constantine of Rome calls the Nicene Council to settle arguments between the Christian bishops throughout his empire. The bishops agree on the Nicene creed establishing a singular form of Christianity out of the many variations and labeling all others, including Unitarians, as heretics who were thrown out of the church.
- 1517 CE Martin Luther tacks his demands for reform of the Catholic church on the doors of the Cathedral at Wittenburg starting what would be known as the Protestant Reformation.
- 1568 CE Edict of Torda, signed by King John Sigismund of Transylvania, establishes religious freedom for all. King John was advised by his court preacher, Francis David, a Unitarian.
- Unitarianism spread to England where it was preached by Theophilus Lindsay and Joseph Priestly.

1770 John Murray lands in the United States and begins preaching a form of Universalist Christianity.

1781 Universalist Christian churches begin appearing in Pennsylvania and New England founded by Elihan Winchester and Benjamin Rush.

In a letter to his friend Thomas Payne, Thomas Jefferson, the third President of the United States writes, "There being no ministers of this kind in my community, I am resigned to being a Unitarian by myself."

1791 Joseph Priestly is run out of England for his Unitarian views and establishes a church where he preaches the Unitarian belief in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.

1793 The Universalist Church in America is created.

1819 William Ellery Channing preaches the Baltimore sermon in which he defines Unitarian Christianity in response to its critics and the American Unitarian Association is established six years later.

1850 Unitarians and Universalist began to work together on many issues of social justice including the abolition of slavery, the creation of the American Red Cross, and assistance for the urban poor in America's major cities such as New York and Chicago.

1868 Olympia Brown becomes the first woman minister in the United States when she is ordained by the Universalist Church.

1870s Unitarians and Universalists at the forefront of the new Biblical scholarship that was uncovering the sources of the ancient texts.

1900 Unitarians and Universalists involved in social justice work were demonstrating that being religious was a matter of what you did in the world, not what name you called God.

1961 Unitarians and Universalists seeing that they had so much in common, merge their two churches to form the Unitarian Universalist Association of Congregations.

1985 The Unitarian Universalist Association adopts the Seven Principles of Unitarian Universalism at its General Assembly in Atlanta, Georgia.

Closing Song 10:05-10:10

Closing Words

Needed	# of tickets for this group
12 tribes of Israel	12
Divide into Judah and Israel	
Assyria	1
Persia	1
Egypt	1
Greek	1
Rome	1
12 apostles	12
They disperse	
Paul	1
People telling stories	3
Mark	
Matthew	
Luke	
John	1
False Paul	1
Constantine	1
A group of Bishops	6
Some are separated out as heretics	
Martin Luther	1
King John Zigismund	1
Francis David	1
A group of Heretics	4
Unitarians, Anabaptists, Calvinists, Lutherans	
Theophilus Lindsay	1
Joseph Priestley	1
John Murray	1
A group of Unitarians	4
A group of Universalists	4
Thomas Jefferson	1
William Ellery Channing	1
Olympia Brown	1
Total	63

2000 BCE

Various tribes of nomadic people moving around an area called the Fertile Crescent around the Mediterranean Sea

They form stories about their God and their tribes. Different tribes call God by many names – Yahweh, Elohim, El Elyon, El Shaddai. Some of the people that they create stories about are Adam and Eve, Cain and Abel, Noah, Abraham and Sarah, Jacob and Rebecca, and Joseph and his brothers. Eventually, several of these tribes are forced to move to Egypt.

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75 CE

Gospel of Mark that tells a story about Jesus' life is written down.

85 CE

Gospels of Matthew and Luke and the book of the Acts of the Apostles are written.

100 CE

Gospel of John is written.

This is the last of the four Gospels that make it into the Bible that is written about 70 years after Jesus has died.

150 CE

False Letters from Paul written

Letters claiming to have been written by Paul begin circulating, establishing various practices of a Church with leaders called Bishops.

314 CE

Council of Nicea

Having converted to Christianity, Emperor Constantine of Rome calls the Nicene Council to settle arguments between the Christian bishops throughout his empire. The bishops agree on the Nicene creed establishing a singular form of Christianity out of the many variations and labeling all others, including Unitarians, as heretics who were thrown out of the church.

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Martin Luther tacks his demands for reform of the Catholic church on the doors of the Cathedral at Wittenburg starting what would be known as the Protestant Reformation.

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1750 CE

Unitarianism spreads to England

In England, Theophilus Lindsay attempts a reform of the Anglican Church and ends up creating Unitarian Churches while Joseph Priestley encourages his actions.

1770 CE

John Murray lands in the
United States and begins
preaching a form of
Universalist Christianity.

1776 CE

Declaration of Independence
is signed.

Among the signatures are several Unitarians including Dr. Benjamin Rush and Thomas Jefferson, its author. In a letter to his friend Thomas Payne, Thomas Jefferson, the third President of the United States writes, "There being no ministers of this kind in my community, I am resigned to being a Unitarian by myself."

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