

Detailed Outline

1. LEVELS OF JUDAISM

a. Reform (Slide 3)

- i. Seen as the progressive form of Judaism.
- ii. More focused on culture and tradition than following Jewish law. Observance is a personal choice.
- iii. These Jewish people will still celebrate Jewish holidays and attend synagogue, but may not follow all of the rules of shabbat or keep kosher.

b. Conservative (Slide 4)

- i. This is a more traditional form of Judaism where the laws are seen as obligatory, but they may not all be followed strictly.
- ii. They may drive to synagogue on shabbat only, keep kosher, or follow some of the kosher laws, but not all.
- iii. They would attend synagogue and observe the Jewish holidays more strictly.
- iv. There is still a wide range of observance here, where some Jews may prefer this style of observance, but may not follow all of the laws in their own home.

c. Orthodox (Slide 5)

- i. This area of Judaism is defined by a more traditional understanding of Jewish law interpreted by rabbis throughout history.
- ii. They observe shabbat and holidays very strictly.
- iii. They do not drive, work, use electricity, or handle money on shabbat.
- iv. They have a modest way of dressing and will spend much more time learning about the tenets of the religion in their homes and in school.
- v. There is also a "Modern Orthodox" movement where Jewish people may follow these laws to the best of their abilities, but still maintain a more modern lifestyle and way of dressing.

2. WHERE ISSUES COME UP

- a. Parents can have different levels of observance.
 - i. Maybe one parent was always more observant than the other, or one parent only observed to please the other one and wouldn't be observant on their own.
- b. Someone who is less religious/observant may want to prioritize Judaism in their daily life or put the children in a religious school.
- c. Some people may want their children to be involved in Jewish school, camps, or activities.
- d. Some may want their child to attend services on the weekends or have a bar-mitzvah
 - i. These things can cost a lot of money!
- e. Will a child who attends a secular school miss school for a Jewish holiday?
- f. Will both homes keep kosher?

3. SHABBOS OVERVIEW

- a. There are many different levels of observance
 - i. When we talk about "observing" a holiday, the rules of shabbat usually also apply.
- b. Shabbos begins on Friday at sundown and ends on Saturday at sundown.

- c. Usually a Friday night service and a Saturday morning service.
- d. Shabbos is considered the day of rest, and there are traditions that go along with that.
 - i. Many different levels of observance
- e. When talking about “observing” a holiday, the rules of Shabbos usually apply.
 - i. Not all holidays are “observed.” (Ex: Hanukkah)

4. OBSERVING SHABBOS, “KEEPING SHABBOS”

- a. No electricity
 - i. Lights and appliances may be on timers
 - ii. No driving or electronic devices
 - iii. You can use a phone in an emergency
- b. No working or creating
 - i. No making or creating (arts & crafts), No drawing or writing, No cutting or tearing unless cooking
- c. No handling money
- d. no carrying outside of the community.
- e. Children may be allowed to taste wine in accordance with Jewish custom.
- f. Walking everywhere, day of relaxation, attending services

5. LEVELS OF SHABBOS OBSERVANCE

- a. Reform:
 - i. May go to synagogue and/or have Friday night dinner
 - ii. Typically don’t “Keep Shabbos”
 - iii. Typically use electricity
- b. Conservative:
 - i. Usually have Friday night dinner and attend services
 - ii. May “Keep Shabbos” to some extent
 - 1. Ex: May drive to synagogue, but nowhere else
 - 2. Ex: May do their best to not use electricity, but may still work, write, take their kids to activities, handle money
- c. Orthodox:
 - i. “Keep Shabbos” strictly with very few exceptions

6. WHERE ISSUES COME UP

- a. Sometimes Shabbos can add to the length of a holiday either at the beginning or end.
 - i. This can create issues for parents who do not live in walking distance of each other.
- b. No electricity means poor communication between parents on these days.
- c. It is common for people who are observant to stay with a friend or family member over shabbat in order to attend services with them and spend shabbat with them. This could help a parent be able to see their child over a holiday if it puts them closer to the child.

7. JEWISH HOLIDAYS

- a. The Hebrew Calendar

- i. Jewish holidays follow a lunar calendar, meaning that they do not fall on the same date each year. This is why Hanukkah, while it is always eight nights, will fall anywhere from the end of November until the beginning of January.
 - ii. Holidays are observed from sundown to sundown.
 - 1. This means a single day holiday will encompass more than one day.
- b. High Holy Days
 - i. These are the most sacred days of the year, and the term “High Holidays” is often used to refer to Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur, which are the two holiest days of the year.
 - ii. High Holy Days or “High Holidays” are Jewish holidays that have some component of observance. Meaning, there will be days that the rules of Shabbat will also apply.
 - iii. Rosh Hashana, Yom Kippur, Passover, Sukkot, Shemini Atzeret/Simchat Torah, Shavuot
- c. Other holidays that are major holidays, but not considered “holy days”:
 - 1. Purim, Hanukkah

8. HIGH HOLIDAY SCHEDULE:

- a. Rosh Hashanah – The Jewish New year
 - i. 9.6.21-9.8.21
- b. Yom Kippur – The Jewish day of Atonement
 - i. 9.15.21-9.16.21
 - ii. Fasting for anyone over Bar-Mitzvah age (12 or 13)
 - iii. Considered the holiest day of the year
- c. Sukkot – Pilgrimage Festival
 - i. 9.20.21-9.27.21
 - ii. The first two days are observed.
 - iii. Families may eat meals in a Sukkah, which is a small hut usually constructed at home or at synagogue.
- d. Shemini Atzeret/Simchat Torah – Torah Celebration
 - i. 9.27.21-9.29.21
- e. Passover – Pilgrimage Festival
 - i. 3.27.21-4.4.21
 - ii. The first two days and last two days are observed.
 - iii. There is a “seder” or meal on the first two nights. Some families may only observe one.
 - iv. Dietary restrictions – no bread, wheat, or pasta.
- f. Shavuot – Torah Celebration and Harvest Celebration
 - i. 5.16.21-5.18.21

9. OTHER HOLIDAYS

- a. These are not considered high holy days, and there is no strict observance, rather simply traditions that are followed.
- b. Hanukkah – Celebration of Lights
 - i. 11.28.21-12.6.21

- ii. Gift Giving
 - iii. Most well-known holiday, but not a religious holiday.
- c. Purim – Celebration of the Book of Esther
 - i. 2.25.21-2.26.21
 - ii. Typically no work or school.
 - iii. Children dress in costumes, usually a small festival or parade in the community or at school.
 - iv. Drinking is also a tradition on this holiday

10. WHERE ISSUES COME UP

- a. Due to the different levels of observance and religion, each person will have different holidays and traditions that are important to them.
- b. An Orthodox Jew may have many more traditions that are important, while a more Reform Jew may only find Hanukkah or Yom Kippur to be highly important.
- c. Children in religious schools will have a lot of days off for these holidays, and there may be several school celebrations where parents and family may be invited to participate.

11. KEEPING KOSHER

- a. “Keeping Kosher” refers to dietary restrictions that more religious Jews will follow. Even many reform Jews will choose to follow some of these restrictions.
 - i. No pork
 - 1. Ham, bacon, sausage
 - ii. No shellfish
 - 1. Shrimp, lobster, clams, oysters
 - iii. No mixing milk and meat in the same meal
 - 1. Pizza with meat toppings, cheeseburger, chicken with a side of mac and cheese, etc...
 - iv. The “Hechsher”
 - 1. This is a symbol that appears on any labeled or packaged foods that shows if the food has been certified Kosher by a Rabbi.
 - 2. This is the “k” or “u” symbol.

12. KEEPING KOSHER CONTINUED:

- a. Reform:
 - i. May not eat pork
 - ii. May not keep kosher at all
- b. Conservative:
 - i. Keeping kosher in the home vs. in and out of the home.
 - ii. Some may keep to a vegetarian diet outside of the home unless at a kosher restaurant.
 - iii. May keep Kosher rules, but not look for the hechsher symbol on every item.
- c. Orthodox:
 - i. Many strict rules on how to separate meat and milk
 - ii. Orthodox Jews may have two sets of dishes, two sinks, two dishwashers, etc...
 - iii. Some families may be mostly dairy free in the home.
 - iv. Wait time between eating milk and meat can vary

13. WHERE ISSUES COME UP

- a. If one parent is stricter than the other, it can create issues where a child may be offered something at one home that he may not be allowed to eat in another.
- b. Turning a blind eye to an unkosher food choice is like giving a child candy or allowing them to eat fast food. If a child regularly keeps kosher, this can be a breach of trust and could promote secrecy from the other parent.

14. THE JEWISH DIVORCE

- a. A "Get"
- b. Separate process from the secular divorce
- c. The "Beit Din" Rabbinical Court