Prologue 2

• **Judeo-Christian Tradition**
  • I) Judaism
  • II) Christianity
  • III) Islam
  • IV) Renaissance and Reformation
I) Judaism

- The religion of the Hebrews is called **Judaism**, and the 1st 5 books of the Hebrew Scriptures are called the Torah.

- Unlike groups around them the Jews were monotheists, who believed in one perfect, knowing and all powerful God.

- Like the Greeks and Romans, the Jews had a written code of laws that God gave their prophet Moses about 1200 BC in the form of the **Ten Commandments**.
I) Judaism

- **Prophets** were leaders and teachers who were believed by the Jews to be messengers from God.
- Jewish religion emphasizes each person’s worth and responsibility to make moral choices.
- Jewish law focuses on morality and ethics and urges people to oppose injustice and oppression.
II) Christianity

- According to their holy book the Bible, Jesus of Nazareth was born around 6 BC and began his ministry at the age of 30.
- His preaching contained many ideas from Jewish tradition, such as monotheism and the principles of the Ten Commandments.
- Jesus’ ideas went beyond traditional morality, he emphasizes God’s personal relationship with each person and the importance of love for God, neighbors, enemies, and themselves.
- He also taught God would establish an eternal kingdom and people who sincerely repented their sins would find life after death in this kingdom.
II) Christianity

• Jesus was crucified about 29 AD because he was viewed by the Romans as a political threat, and according to his followers rose from the dead 3 days later.

• In spreading the teachings of Jesus, Paul establishes the religion of Christianity, which came from the Greek word Christos or savior.

• Paul stressed that Jesus was the son of God and had died for peoples sins, and declared Christianity a universal religion open to Jews and non-Jews alike.

• Rome aids the spread of Judaism and Christianity by exiling the Jews (Diaspora) in 70 AD and later in 380 AD by adopting the Christian religion.
III) Islam

• Islam was another monotheistic religion that taught equality of all persons and individual worth.
• It developed in southwest Asia in the early 600’s, and was based on the teachings of Muhammad.
• He emphasized the dignity and brotherhood of all human beings and unity of all people required a tolerance of different groups within the community.
• Muslims (followers of Islam) were required to offer help to those in need and rulers had to obey the same laws as those they ruled.
Legacy of Monotheistic Religions

• Several ideals crucial to the shaping of a democratic outlook emerged from the early monotheistic religions of southwest Asia.
  – 1) the duty of the individual and the community to combat oppression
  – 2) the worth of the individual
  – 3) the equality of people before God
IV) Renaissance and Reformation

• By the Middle Ages (1000-1500) the Roman Catholic Church had developed from Christianity, becoming the most powerful institution in Europe, influencing all aspects of life.

• Beginning in the 14th Century, a movement called the Renaissance (rebirth) places renewed focus on classical (Greece and Rome) culture and role of the individual.

• The Reformation divides Christianity into Protestantism and Catholicism, furthering the spirit of questioning that had begun during the Renaissance.

• Both the Renaissance and the Reformation promote ideas that are important in the development of democracy (importance of the Individual).