

There was once a man from Ur (in modern day Iraq) called 'Abram' (not Abraham yet), who felt he had a calling from God to worship just him and no other gods. God promised Abram that if he did this he would be the leader of a great tribe, who eventually became known as Jews, in a 'Promised Land'.

To show that God has made a promise with Abram, God changes his name to Abraham. It is a new name to show the start of a new promise, or a 'covenant' with God that from now on Abraham's followers will worship only him. Abraham starts the first monotheistic religion.

Thousands of years later, Abraham and his descendants (people who can trace their family names back to him) are now known as Jews and live mainly in Israel. One day, one of these Jews, a young man called Jesus Christ, decides to start preaching the word of God.

Jesus is killed by the Romans, having been betrayed by a fellow Jew, Judas Iscariot. Jesus's disciples (followers and close friends) who are left behind, decide to start a new form of Judaism called 'Christianity' after Jesus Christ. Eventually this has so many followers it becomes a religion itself.

Seven hundred years later, a man called Mohammed who lived in Saudi Arabia begins to write down a new version of all of the Jewish and Christian stories after having a visit from God whilst meditating. Mohammed's friends also write down his own sayings and life story. The readers of the Qur'an and followers of Mohammed become known as Muslims. Their religion is known as Islam.

Today, although Islam, Christianity and Judaism exist all around the world - and all are monotheistic religions which started with Abraham - most people think of them as being very different. Actually, the three religions have a lot in common.