

**TERROR AND TRUE BELIEF: The Jewish King Who
Reinvented the Faith of Ancient Israel
Reading Guide
Mr. Bayer – World History**

Name: _____

Pre-Reading: In this class we have been discovering a general shift from a Neolithic-era cooperative/goddess culture to a patriarchal/warrior-dominator culture as we have ventured from pre-ancient to ancient history. By the second millennia BCE it is commonly held that these warrior gods demand blood sacrifice. We are about to dig into another major revolutionary shift in culture as humans in modern-day Israel in the second and first millennia BCE develop a monotheistic tradition.

Why might the cultural shift from pagan polytheism to monotheism be extremely important in world/Western history? What kind of major cultural differences will adopting a monotheistic tradition have?

1. (P. 66) "...some passages seem to pronounce a death sentence on any man, woman or child who dares to follow any deity other than Yahweh." Q: How do modern-day Christians and Jews view such passages in the Bible/Torrah?
2. (after reading the bottom of P.66-68) Q: How is Moses (a central/foundational figure in Judaism/Christianity) Portrayed in his treatment of the Midianites? What are the potential implications on the historical ethics (moral principles) of these monotheistic religions?
3. (P. 67-69) What evidence does Kirsch (the author) give to support the idea that the God of Israel (Yahweh) is a "God of Armies"?
4. (Middle paragraph on P. 68) For what, ultimately does the Judeo-Christian God punish King Saul?
5. (P. 69) What is the point of the Israelites-conquest-of-Canaan story?
6. (P. 70) Why is King Josiah so important in the history of the Israelites?
7. (P. 71-72) How does Josiah use the lost scroll found in the temple? Why does he do this?
8. (last paragraph of the section "A Pious Fraud" on P. 73) What big idea does King Josiah establish – why is this important?
9. (Bottom of P. 74 to 76) What was Alexander the Great's approach to religion in his empire?
10. (Bottom of P. 75) What is "syncretism" and why is it important?
11. (P. 76-78) In what ways was King Antiochus IV an antagonist to the Jews?
12. (P.78-79) How did those who resisted Antiochus's persecution (Mattathias, his son Judah, the Maccabees) draw upon the Jewish-righteous-conquest-of-Canaan story for their cause?
13. (P. 79-80) What was the importance of the Maccabee policy of forced circumcision?
14. (P. 81-82) What was the result of the Jewish Civil War (Hellenized Jews vs. Pious Ones) in the 1st Century BCE?
15. (P. 82-83) Describe the governing approach of King Herod, the new king after the civil war.
16. (P. 84) What did the Zealots (similar to Pious Ones) want?
17. (P. 84) – How does the story of Jesus of Nazareth, a Jewish Messiah (one who Jews hoped could save them from Roman persecution) fit into all of this?
18. (P. 85-86) – After you read about the martyrdom at Masada, what is "martyrdom"? How is it different from "holy war"?
19. (P. 87 – 90) What is the "revolution" (1st full paragraph on page 88) that happens with the destruction of Solomon's temple?
20. (P. 87-91) What happens to views of Judaism and monotheism in the Roman Empire?