

## Being Jewish

*By Eva Dobrovolska*

Some may think that being Jewish means having a Magen David around your neck, or wearing a Kipah on your head; in my opinion being Jewish means something much more. Good evening everyone my name is Eva Dobrovolska and tonight I'm here to talk about what it truly means to be Jewish. I think of it like there are five steps for the meaning of our culture, it gets better with every step until we get to the greatest thing about Judaism.

The first step is our holidays. Some holidays are about fun like Purim while others are about history like Pesah. But, what makes every holiday special is the fact that they all come to teach us something. Take Tu B'Shvat for example, we learn about nature and how important the tree and water cycles are.

The next step is our community, without our community I doubt that we would still be here today. Our community is very important because it makes us feel united like a family. I once heard a quote that said everyone's your family. This quote tells us that family is not only in our blood; it is also in our heart.

The third step is our synagogue; it is one of the holiest places for me. It's where I feel like I'm in my own little world. I have time to reflect on my actions and improve. Every time I step into the synagogue with my mom, I hear different people singing the Torah trope and chanting the prayers. It is not only the singing that I love it is also all the spirit in the synagogue.

Next comes step number four; to me it is the Torah. The Torah is the reason why the Jews remain in this world; we have followed its rules for thousands of years. Moshe wrote the Torah when he was on mount Sinai. Without the Torah the Jewish nation would be like trees without water. On Hanukah when the Greeks forbid us to practice our religion we hid in caves secretly studied Torah with only a candle to see.

Finally the fifth step is God. Hashem is the reason we are here on this earth. Look around you; everything you see is thanks to God. Every religion is different but the thing we all have in common is that we all believe in God. When I'm scared I talk to Hashem, the reason why I do it is because I believe in God. In times when you're scared your belief is the only thing that keeps you going. These are my best five highlights about being Jewish, but we don't have the same opinions, do we? So, when you all go home tonight I want you to think about, what is your best highlight about being Jewish? And remember, even if it's costumes on Purim, or presents on Hanukah, whatever it is as long as you believe in it that's what makes it special.