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JEDIISM

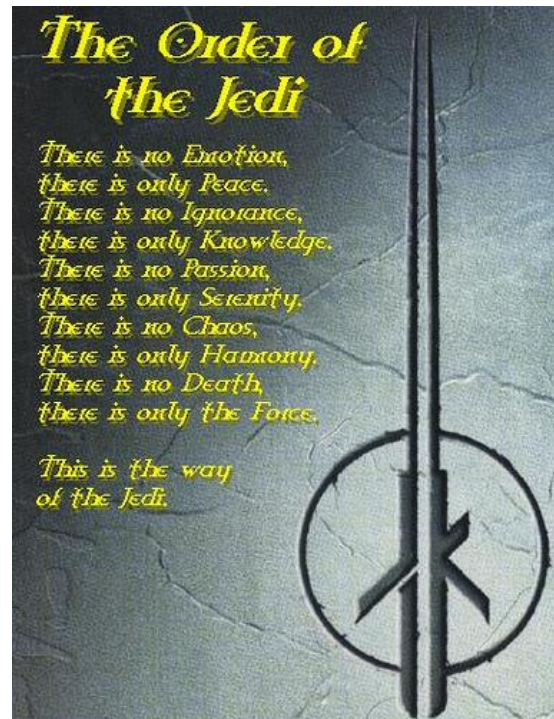


While Jediism may initially sound like a group of people who worship the Star Wars movies, George Lucas or would do anything to have Jedi mind powers or something of that sort, this religion is anything but. Sure there are probably a few people following it who do that, but the majority know and understand that the movies are fiction and that they will never have any sort of super Jedi powers. That being said, these people instead look at the teachings and wisdom of the movies and also at what the Jedi believe and live by. Of course, they also believe in the Force. It may seem a little crazy to develop a religion based on a movie, but Jediism shares many beliefs with several other religions such as Buddhism, Taoism, Shinto and many others. It may not be as crazy as it seems.



Jediism was officially founded in 2008 by Daniel Jones. Obviously, the idea of Jediism sprouted after the Star Wars movie release in 1977. Once the movies were out, people started to look at the Jedi ways and some decided that what the

Jedi believed was similar to that of their own beliefs. Thus began Jediism. Unfortunately, many people aren't taking the religion seriously, even though it's just as real a religion as any other, and there's more of a reason than it just coming from a movie. In 2001, the people of Britain were told to answer that their religion was Jedi on that year's census in order to get the religion officialised. Around 390,000 people answered that their religion was Jedi. That number is incorrect, because of the people who answered as a joke or support, but there are supposedly more Jedi than Scientologists in Britain. While these results are a reason many people look at the religion as a joke, they also helped to get it recognized and, eventually, official.



While they don't have any sacred texts, one could say that the Star Wars movies and books are like their Bible, since that's where their beliefs and theories came from. That being said, the backbone of Jediism belief is that of the Force. The Force exists in everything and everyone. It surrounds and is inside everything, and it connects the entire universe. It exists as a neutral form of energy, but, depending on how a person acts, treats others and so on, this energy can be converted to either a positive energy or a negative energy. These energies are referred to as Light and Dark. Jedi are encouraged to live on the Light side of the Force.



To keep themselves on the Light side of things, Jedi regularly practice meditation, as they believe that it clears the mind of all negative thoughts. This cleansing leaves room for more positive thoughts, which help the mind to think more clearly in decision making, and it leaves more room for knowledge. Jedi believe in learning as much as they can, especially when it comes to other religions. They're encouraged to look at other religions

and see the good and truth in their teachings, rather than see what's different or 'wrong'. Also, a Jedi is not just confined to the one religion. They're allowed to adopt any religion they wish to their beliefs, so there are many Christian Jedi, or other such combinations, out in the world. Jedi strive to be a very tolerant group of people who accept everyone as they are and hold no prejudice or bias toward anyone.



I think this religion is definitely on the right track and the people who came up with the belief system all had good heads on their shoulders. This religion teaches everything a

religion should: peace, acceptance, kindness and tolerance. They're encouraged to go out in the world and learn through experience and then take the knowledge learned and apply it to everyday life.

On the Church of Jediism website, they had downloadable Jedi training ebooks, and, so, I downloaded the first one. At the end, it had a chart of 21 days, and each day had something a Jedi had to accomplish as part of their training. These tasks were things like, 'learn something new today,' 'tell someone you love you love them in a meaningful way,' 'give someone a compliment,' 'make it your goal not to have any conflict today,' and things like that. If this isn't the kind of stuff a religion should be teaching its followers, I don't know what is.

Day 1 Make it your goal to learn something new today.	2 Tells some one something they don't know about you.	3 Today Try a New food.	4 Make it your goal to shake some ones hand today.	5 Give some one a compliment.	6 Try to make some one laugh.	7 Take one hour of your time to just totally relax in silence but think of something that makes you smile.
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