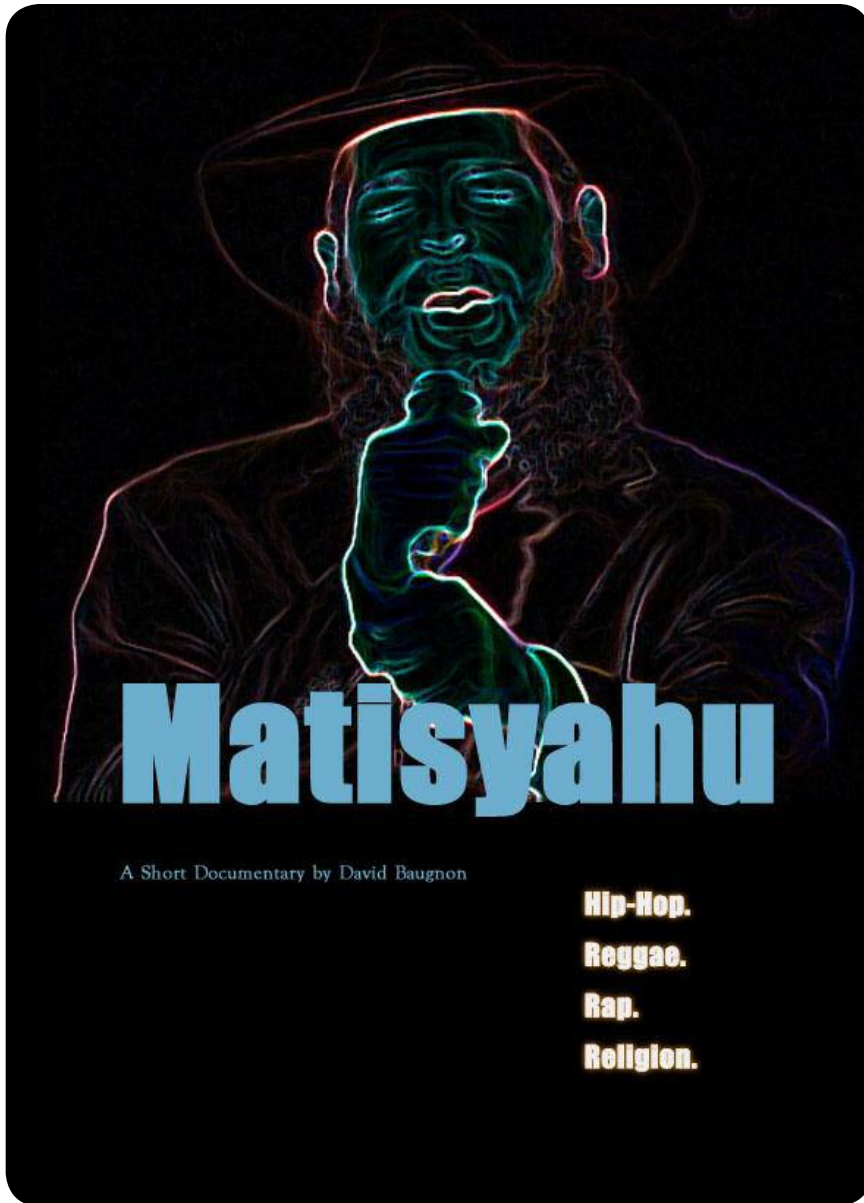


# Discussion Guide



Matisyahu (Matthew in Hebrew) is a Hasidic Reggae/Beat Box/Rapper. After seeing a curious and entertaining performance of his, I decided to follow and film Matisyahu as he performed in New York City and explained his conversion to Hasidism. His mission is to ignite spirituality in others with his music. This film shows the spiritual struggles of one man who gave up everything (including music) to follow his heart and then discovered that "God gave it back to him in the right way."



**National Film Network**

4501 Forbes Boulevard, Lanham, MD 20706  
www.nationalfilmnetwork.com  
1-800-431-4586

**Audience**

Intended for most audiences

**Courses**

- History
- Social Studies

**Notes**

**Age/Grade**

Worn viewers that there is some reference to his life before finding God, including a brief line about drugs and alcohol.

High School and up. May be inappropriate for younger grades.

**Instructions/Advice**

Watch the film first and create a list of questions to ask the class.

**IMPORTANT FEATURES**

**Cautionary Remarks**

Perhaps a discussion on the various types of Judaism as well as the over-lapping points of Reggae, Rap and Beat Boxing.

**Vocabulary**

Hasidism

Yiddish

Davoning (praying)

Payus (hair braids)

Shabbats (the Sabbath)

**Understanding**

Understanding the various types of Judaism and how different they are would increase understanding of the film. Understanding the spiritual influence on Reggae would increase understanding of the film.



# THINGS TO THINK ABOUT / THOUGHT PROVOKING QUESTIONS

## Notes

- Where did Matisyahu live until he was five?
- What kind of music was Matisyahu into growing up?
- What kind of ideas did Matisyahu see in Reggae music?
- Why isn't Matisyahu's music for Jewish people alone?
- Where did Matisyahu go when he was 16 and what did he see?
- What was Matisyahu's experience in high school after his trip abroad?
- Why did Matisyahu give up his music?

## OTHER RESOURCES

### Articles

A host of articles on Matisyahu can be found in the *New York Times*, *The New York Daily News*, *Rolling Stone*, etc. with a google search

