

Religious Studies Revision Guide



Component 3 Judaism

NAME:

COMPONENT THREE IS DIVIDED INTO TWO CLEAR SECTIONS:

- Beliefs and Teachings
- Practices

WHO'S WHO?!

Jews DO NOT all share the same beliefs and practices. They will differ depending on upbringing, where they come from and their own reasoning!

Modern Orthodox Jews



This is the largest branch of Judaism in Britain. Modern orthodox Jews believe that God gave the Torah to Moses on Mount Sinai and Jews must uphold it as closely as they can in modern life. Modern Orthodox Jews are faithful to Jewish teachings but embrace modern culture also.

Reform Jews



These Jews are faithful to very many of the traditional Jewish customs and beliefs, however, they believe that Judaism must be in harmony with modern lifestyles which means not all ancient practices can or should be followed. Some beliefs also differ to Orthodox Jews.

Ultra Orthodox Jews



These Jews are very traditional in their beliefs and practices and stick closely to the Torah commandments. They are a fast-growing group in Britain as they have a very high birth rate. They separate themselves from the majority of society and shun modern life such as technology.

KEY CONCEPTS

Synagogue	House of assembly; building for Jewish public prayer, study and assembly.
Shekhinah	the place where God's presence rests and can be felt.
Shabbat	Day of spiritual renewal and rest. Beginning at sunset on Friday and closing at nightfall on Saturday.
Kosher	Means "fit" or "proper". Foods that are permitted to be eaten according to Leviticus 11. It is also used to refer to the purity of ritual objects such as Torah scrolls.
Torah	The five books of Moses [Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers & Deuteronomy]. Regarded as the holiest books of the Tenakh.
Mitzvot	The term has a mix of meanings. It is often used to refer to duties {such as the 613 in the Torah} and good deeds. "Commandments".
Messiah	The anointed One who Jews believe will bring in a new era or age for humankind. This will include rebuilding the Temple and bringing in an age of Universal Peace.
Covenant	A promise or agreement between two parties. Covenants were made between God with Noah, Abraham and Moses.

What do Jews believe?

There are huge differences in the way Jews think, believe and behave! However, in the 12th Century, a Jewish Rabbi called Maimonides devised 13 "principles" of faith that most Orthodox Jews still see as central to their faith today:

- God exists, is perfect and created everything in existence
- God is One ("God's unity")
- God does not have a physical body and so is not affected by the same needs as humans
- God is eternal
- Only God should be worshipped
- God communicates with people through prophets
- Moses is the most important prophet

- The Torah was given to Moses by God
- The Torah is God's Law and cannot be changed
- God is all-knowing and knows everything that is going to happen
- God will reward good and punish evil
- The belief that the Messiah will come
- The dead will be resurrected

BELIEFS & TEACHINGS

The Nature of God

God as ONE:

Judaism is a **monotheistic religion**. This means the belief in one God.

This means He is the only thing that should be praised as He alone has the power over all things. He is almighty.

God is a single, whole being that cannot be divided.

It is the belief that God is ever present in people's lives; every sight they see, every sound they hear, and experience they are aware of is regarded as a meeting with God.

God is everlasting and beyond something that humans can understand because of how great God is.

The importance of the Shema prayer in Judaism

The Shema is a prayer said at least daily by most Jews (often at morning and night) and it reflects the belief in monotheism (God is One). It is made up from passages in Deuteronomy and begins with the all-important line:

"Hear O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one"

As well as reciting the prayer daily, it is also contained in a box (called a Mezuzah) on each doorpost in the Jewish home (except the bathroom!)

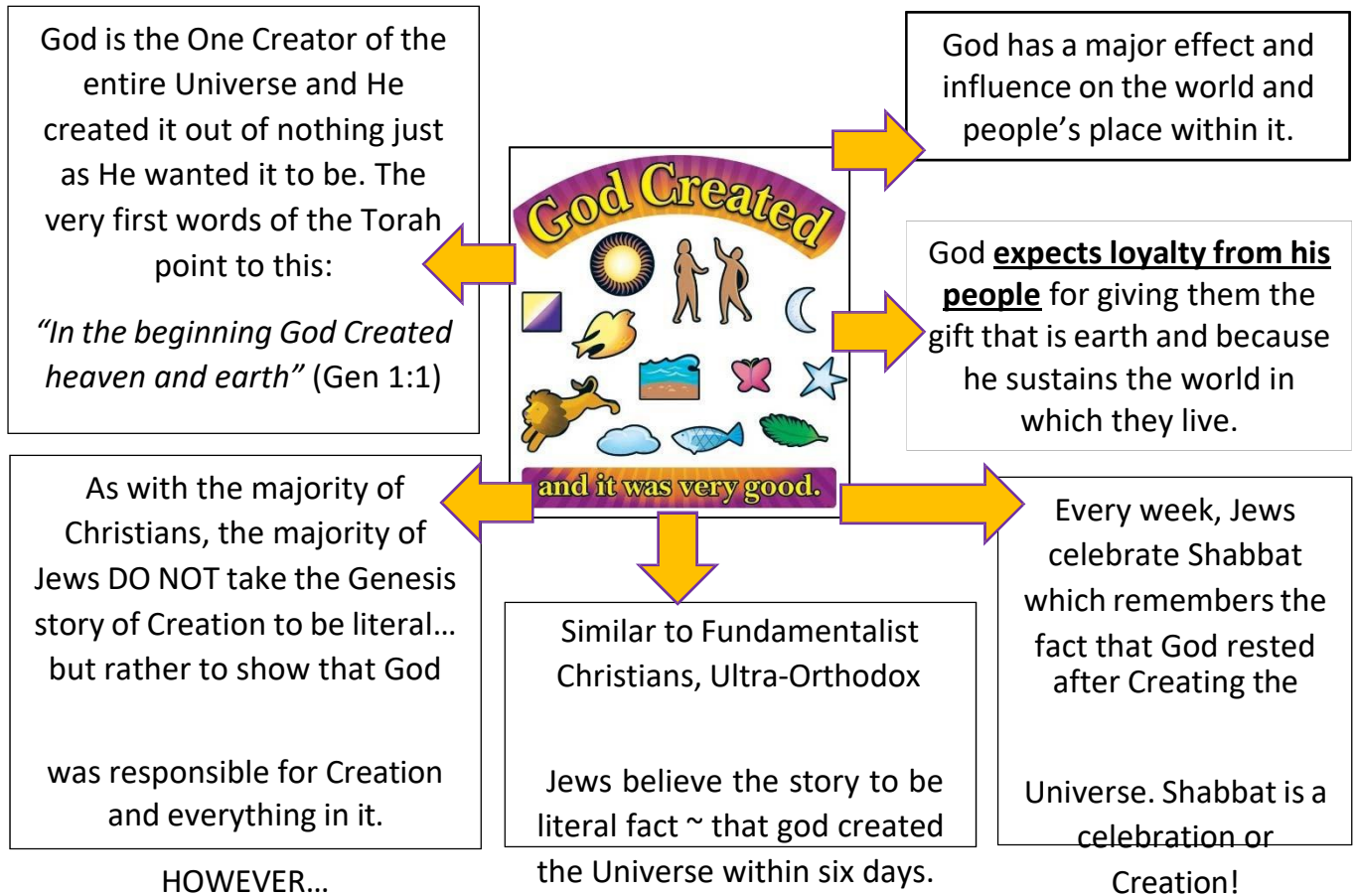
Finally, the design of Jewish synagogues also highlight that God is One ~ they contain no statues or representations of human beings ~ God alone should be worshipped

The Shema

"Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God,
The Lord is one. Love the Lord
Your God with all your heart,
And with all your soul,
And with all your strength.
These commandments
That I give to you today
Are to be put upon your hearts.
Impress them on your children..."

Deuteronomy 6:4-7

God as Creator

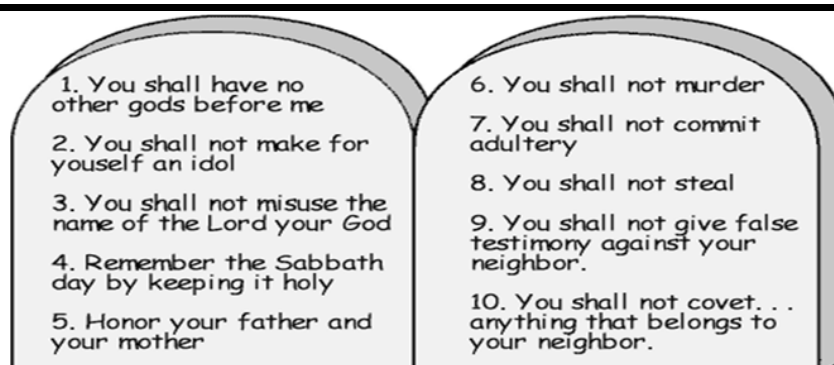


God as Law-Giver

God gave the Ten Commandments to Moses after he rescued the Jewish slaves from Egypt, **probably in the thirteenth century BCE.**

In providing the Ten Commandments and the 613 Mitzvot (laws) in the Torah, Jews believe that **God has set the basis of his relationship with his people**, and that is the purpose of God being the law giver.

God gave laws to **help people exercise their free will in the correct way.**



God as Judge

For Jews, God is a God of Justice. This means that He is fair and treats everyone with equality. Humans may not fully understand God's judgements, but we can be sure that He takes no pleasure in judging people wrongly or unfairly. The Jewish scriptures state;

"You are not a God that has pleasure in wickedness" (Psalms)

HOW DOES THE FESTIVAL OF ROSH HASHANAH LINK TO GOD AS A JUDGE?



This is the Jewish New Year and it celebrates The Creation. Jews believe that at Rosh Hashanah, God judges everyone on how they have kept his laws and commands.

The teachings of the Rabbis actually speaks about how God weighs our good deeds on the scales against our bad deeds!



But God is a God of mercy. Therefore, there is a period of ten days after Rosh Hashanah before the festival of Yom Kippur (The Day of Atonement). In this time, Jews can try to make up for any bad deeds and ask for forgiveness. We will be ultimately judged after death (when it is too late to repent), so we must make amends while we can!

THE IMPORTANCE OF SHEKHINAH IN JUDASIM



This refers to the PRESENCE or "DWELLING" of God on Earth. Originally the Shekinah would be found in the Temple, but after its destruction in 70AD, there are differences about where it rested. Some Jews believe it followed them into exile, others believe it never left the Temple area! (which is why many believe Israel to be very special).

There are various times today when Jews believe Shekhinah to be present ~ not just when God is THERE (God is EVERYWHERE!!) but where his presence **can be physically felt:**

- ✚ In the Ark in every synagogue (the place where the sacred scriptures are kept). A light eternally shines at each Ark to signify this ~ the light is called the Ner Tamid.
- ✚ When Jews are studying together as a group of ten or more

- ✚ When Jews are praying and worshipping together as a group of ten or more (such a group is called a minyan).

Jews believe that Shekhinah accompanied them on the Exodus journey and was sometimes imaged as a pillar of fire. On experiencing the presence of Shekhinah, many Jews speak of feeling empowered, content, blessed and peaceful.

THE IMPORTANCE OF MASHIACH (Messiah) IN JUDAISM

Jews believe in a “Messianic Age” and greatly look forward to it. It is a time when the world will be at peace and there will be complete harmony. **THERE IS NO DIRECT REFERENCE TO IT IN THE TORAH!**

HOWEVER...scriptures have been interpreted to decide what it might be like (e.g. Isaiah talks of a time when the “*wolf will live with the lamb*”



MOST Jews believe that the first step in achieving the Messianic Age will be the coming of the MESSIAH and the resurrection of the dead.

- ✓ Mashiach is Hebrew for Messiah and means “anointed”.
- ✓ **Orthodox Jews believe** that the Messiah will be a physical man, an ideal ruler.
- ✓ **Reform Jews** believe that “Mashiach” is not an actual figure...it refers to the good actions of God’s people bringing about the Messianic Age.

Jewish beliefs about the Messiah are so varied because

- 1. There are no definite teachings about the Messiah in the Torah so Jews rely on interpretations of scripture**
- 2. Jews believe we shouldn’t focus on “what is to come in the next life” as it is beyond our understanding! We should focus on our actions here and now!**

So we are left with two important questions about the Jewish ideas of the Messiah;

- When might he come?
- What will he do?

When will Mashiach arrive?

Orthodox belief:

Believe **God has a specific date that the Messiah will arrive.**

Some Orthodox believe **the world will first need to get better** to be ready for the Messiah and then he will come.

Other Orthodox believe that **the world will get worse** and then the Messiah will come and put it right

Reform belief:

Don't believe that the Messiah is a physical being. They place little focus on any timings for Mashiach.

The main focus for Reform Jews is Jews **looking forward to the messianic Age** and **working hard themselves towards that goal.**

There have been many false prophets making claims about Mashiach:

In 1868, one rabbi predicted the Messiah would come in 1913!

In the 17th century, Shabbetai Tzvi claimed to be the Messiah and was believed by many thousands who followed him. However, under threat of death he converted to Islam and proved to be a false Messiah!

What will the Messiah do?

Orthodox Jews (those who hold a belief in a physical Messiah) are divided ~ some see him as a supernatural being while others see him as a human who is a great political leader and judge. Many believe he will be descended from the great Jewish King David.

In the **TENAKH**, three actions of the Messiah are referred to:

- He will **bring Jews back to Israel** and **restore Jerusalem**
- He will **rebuild the Temple in Jerusalem** (destroyed in 70AD)
- He will **establish a time of peace** without conflict.

TENAKH:

Be clear, this is the 24 books of Jewish Scripture. It includes the Torah (most important), Neviim (books of the prophets) and Ketuvim (holy writings)



THE IMPORTANCE OF COVENANT IN JUDASIM

Remember...

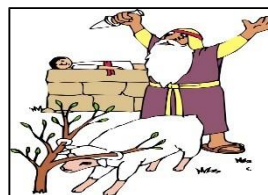
Covenant is a promise or agreement between two people or groups.

Covenants were made in the Bible between God and

- Noah
- Abraham
- Moses

You particularly need to know about The Covenants with Abraham and Moses.

The Covenant with Abraham:



Considered the **founding "Father" of the Jewish religion** ~ the first to believe in only ONE GOD!

Came from Ur (Mesopotamia) in modern day Iraq / Syria.

WHO WAS ABRAHAM?

— He was **originally called "Abram"** but God changed it to "Abraham" meaning "**Father of many nations**"

Because of his faith, **God called on him to leave his home and establish a new life.**

His ~~father's~~ **job was an "pagan idol maker"**. Abraham would often smash the pagan idols!

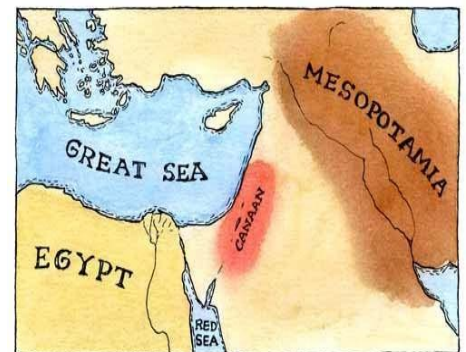
There are three main parts of the Abrahamic Covenant:

1. The Promised Land

Abraham and his family were called to leave their home and go to a land that God would show them...they settled in Canaan (now called "Israel").

The land is referred to as "The Promised Land" because God promised that this land would be for the descendants of Abraham.

Jews have continued to live in (though not always control) this land until today.

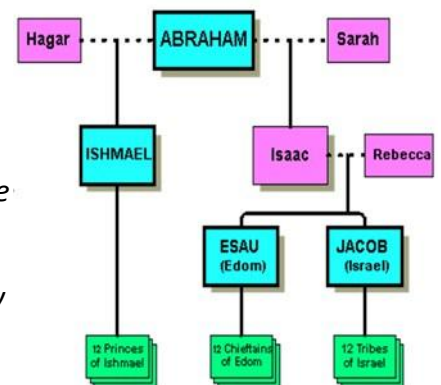


2. The Promise of descendants

God promised an infertile Abram he would give him "many descendants" and changed his name to Abraham (meaning Father of many nations).

"I will increase your number and make you into nations ~ kings will be your descendants" (Genesis 17: 6)

"To you and your offspring I will give you the land where you are now living as a foreigner" (Genesis 17:8)



3. The Promise of blessing and redemption

In his covenant with Abraham, God promised to bless him and his future descendants:

"I will make you a great nation. I will bless you and make you great. You shall become a blessing" (Genesis 12: 2)

"I will bless those who bless you, and he who curses you, I will curse." (Genesis 13: 3)

God then "sealed" this covenant with the rite of circumcision, in which it was requested of Abraham that the foreskin be removed in all baby boys on the eighth day after birth ~ in so doing, all males will carry a lifelong mark in their flesh of their blessed relationship with God:

"You shall be circumcised through the flesh of your foreskin. This shall be the mark of the covenant between Me and you." (Genesis 17: 11)

"The uncircumcised male whose foreskin has not been circumcised, shall have his soul cut off from his people; he has broken My Covenant" (Genesis 17: 14)





The Covenant with **Moses**:

This is considered by Jews to be the other major covenant, made between God and Moses. Moses is considered the most important prophet in Judaism and Jews believe he is the only human to have seen God face to face.

He is important in Judaism for a variety of reasons;

- He was obedient to God's will...as we all must be
- He was the receiver of miracles...God acted through him.
- He delivered God's Word to the people
- He released the Jews from slavery in Egypt.

Important quotes to use when answering a GCSE question on The Covenant with Moses:

"I will be with you" said God.
"Proof that I have sent you will come when you get the people out of Egypt and you will then all become God's servants on this mountain" (Exodus 3: 12)

God said to Moses "You must say to the Israelites, Yahweh, the God of your Fathers, the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob has sent me to you" (Exodus 3: 12)

Moses & The Mitzvot (The Law):

Moses was given the Law after he led the people out of Egypt. He went up Mount Sinai to be with God and he disappeared behind the thick cloud covering. Here Moses received The Torah (The Law contained in the books Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus and Deuteronomy). There are 613 Mitzvot in the Torah. Some of them are no longer relevant (as they refer to temple practices and the Temple was destroyed in 70 AD) and ten of the Mitzvot are the Ten Commandments.

SOME JEWS believe that Moses also received the ORAL TORAH while up Mt. Sinai ~ this is the detailed explanation of the law...e.g:



The WRITTEN TORAH states:
"Keep holy the Sabbath Day"

The ORAL TORAH explains:

*How?
What can / can't be done?
Do I have to work? Etc.*

According to Jewish tradition, every Jewish soul that would ever be born was present at that moment, and agreed to be bound by this covenant.

The importance of the **Ten Commandments**:

- The Commandments should be kept by all Jews ~ no matter who they are
- They are central to Jewish beliefs and practices (as the following diagram highlights:

The **FIRST FOUR** commandments relate to the **Jews' relationship with God**:

- | | | |
|---|---|---|
| 1. I am the Lord your God, who brought you out of slavery in Egypt. | ➡ | Celebrated in the Jewish festival of Pesach (Passover) |
| 2. Do not have any other gods before me. | ➡ | Highlighted in the Shema prayer ~ recited daily. |
| 3. Do not take the Lord's name in vain. | ➡ | The name of God is so holy to Jews, it is written G-d. |
| 4. Remember to keep holy the Sabbath Day. | ➡ | Sabbath (Shabbat) is the holiest day for all Jews with strict guidance on what can and can't be done. |

The **NEXT SIX** commandments relate to the **Jews' relationship with each other**:

- | | | |
|--|---|---|
| 5. Honour your father and mother. | ➡ | Respectful family relationships (especially toward the elderly) are central to Judaism. |
| 6. Do not commit adultery. | ➡ | Sex is important ~ "fill the earth and multiply". The command to avoid adultery cannot even be broken to save a life! |
| 7. Do not steal. | ➡ | Honesty is a quality that Jews treasure in society. |
| 8. Do not commit murder. | ➡ | Pikuach Nefesh (saving a life) is so important that other Mitzvot can be broken to fulfil it. |
| 9. Do not bear false witness (lie). | ➡ | Justice is a central quality to Judaism. |
| 10. Do not be jealous of your neighbour's wife/husband or possessions. | ➡ | The Talmud refers to envy as "the evil eye". |

Life on Earth within Judaism

The importance of the human life:

Jews firmly place emphasis on life, not death! They look to the fact that in Genesis, God created humans in his own image and therefore believe that humans are worthy of respect and dignity.

Remember, Jews also believe that Judgement from God will be based on how they have lived their life.

When we say “cheers” at celebrations, Jews say “L’Chaim” ~ meaning “to life” and when someone dies in Judaism, the relatives are wished “long life”.

“My God, the soul you placed in me is pure. You created it, you fashioned it, you breathed it into me”

A Jewish prayer

“Before you I have placed life and death, the blessing and the curse. You must choose life, so that you and your descendants will survive”

Torah

“Whoever destroys a single life is considered as if he had destroyed the whole world, and whomever saves a single life as if he had saved the whole world”

Talmud

The nature & importance of Pikuach Nefesh:

Like Christians, Jews believe that human life is sacred because God has created us and therefore we belong to him. They point to the same scripture as Christians to back up this belief:

✚ “The God said ‘let us make man in our image and likeness’...so in the image of God, he created them, male and female he created them.” (Genesis 1)

✚ “When I had not yet formed you in the womb, I knew you...” (Jeremiah 1)



PIKUACH NEFESH is the belief that the saving of a life should take priority over everything else ~ even if it means breaking the mitzvot in the Torah!

The saving of human life is more important than observance of the law. There are only three mitzvot that CANNOT be broken, even to save a life;

- Idolatry (worshipping false gods)
- Incest (sex with family members)
- Adultery (sex outside of the marriage)

What is permissible?



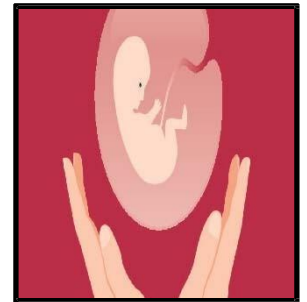
A doctor can answer emergency calls on Shabbat, even though he should not be working.

Food that is not kosher could be eaten if a person was literally going to die otherwise (diabetic hypo??)

Even breaking fast on Yom Kippur (the Day of Atonement) is acceptable to save a life!

A FINAL WORD REGARDING ABORTION & PIKUACH NEFESH:

- Abortion is not forbidden in Judaism but is reserved for serious circumstances as we were instructed to “fill the world” in Genesis and Life belongs to God.
- Some Jews will accept abortion ONLY if the mother’s life is at risk.
- Some Jews will allow abortion on the grounds of the mother’s mental health or the disability of the foetus.
- A small number of Jews will not permit abortions at all after the first 40 days of pregnancy (when Yahweh gives a soul to the body)



The 613 Mitzvot:

“Mitzvot” is a complex idea, meaning “commandments” (God’s Law) and the doing of good deeds but also being given a great honour (such as reading from the Torah. There are 613 mitzvot in the Torah, given to Moses on Mount Sinai.

ORTHODOX JEWS

They believe that it is important to keep as many of the 613 Mitzvot as possible (although some are impossible because they relate to the Temple which no longer exists). They believe they will be judged on how well they have kept the Mitzvot and that keeping them brings us nearer to God.

REFORM JEWS

They see the Mitzvot as important but believe they must be viewed within a modern setting...therefore there are some mitzvot that do not fit in with a modern lifestyle (e.g. those relating to menstruation or wearing certain fabrics)

They believe that God can be found more in the way we treat each other.

MITZVAH DAY!



Mitzvah Day started in Britain in 2008 ~ it is followed by Jews and non-Jews and quickly spread to be a global celebration.

It is a day set aside when people work together to

- Reduce poverty
- Care for the environment
 - Care for others
- Perform good deeds

Three Jewish concepts have particular importance on Mitzvah Day:

Tikkun olam: “Healing” or protecting the world. This concentrates on looking after the environment and those in it. Two initiatives that Mitzvah Day has led to are **Sunshine to Seniors** ~ providing care to the elderly and **Plant a Tree on Mitzvah day** ~ which speaks for itself!



Gemilut hasadim: The “giving of loving kindness” ~ expecting nothing in return! 37,000 participants every year perform random acts of kindness on Mitzvah day!



Tzedakah: “Righteousness and Justice” shown through social actions and loving acts. These must not be done for any other reason than because the Jewish faith educates that it is the right thing to do.



Free Will:

Free Will

Judaism teaches that people are NOT born sinful...but born with natural ways to act (inclinations / tendencies):

YETZER HA TOV ~ The inclination or urge to do good actions

YETZER HA RA ~ The inclination of urge to do evil actions

A person is born with them in equal balance, but the more good or bad actions we do, the more the balance shifts!

There is no DEVIL ~ it is the yetzer ha ra within everyone that creates evil!

“Free will” means that **choices** will always have **consequences**.

Adam and Eve’s disobedience in Genesis teaches Jews that **God has allowed them to choose how they live their lives**.

Eve disobeyed God and persuaded Adam to do the same, the consequences were severe and continue to affect humankind today. **Humans fell out of God’s favour and were punished.**

Choosing to act in a way that pleases God should bring about a life of fulfilment and a guarantee that **God will judge them well on the Day of Judgment.**

Jews believe that **you should not use free will as an excuse for doing wrong actions.** It will not bring them closer to God.

Jews believe that it is impossible to hide acts of evil from God. They also believe that one act of kindness can not make a person good. Each act, good or evil will be considered by God in the ten days of judgement between Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur. Bad acts can be forgiven if repentance is shown and charity is carried out. But any evil act towards another must be forgiven by them before God can forgive.

The afterlife within Judaism

Jewish beliefs in Life After Death

Olam Ha-Ba

The afterlife in Judaism is called Olam Ha-Ba, meaning "The world to come". This term is used in 2 different ways

- ❖ A person's afterlife
- ❖ The Messianic Age (when *Mashiach* comes)

Jews don't spend much time considering the afterlife!

Why?

- It is more important to live THIS life in a way that is pleasing to God to prepare for whatever is to come
- It is not for humans to understand the ways of God!

All Jews believe that this world should be our main focus and should be a preparation for the world to come. The following quotes from the Talmud (teachings of the rabbi's passed down through generations) highlight this focus on life rather than death...

"This world is like a lobby before the Olam Ha-Ba. Prepare yourself in the lobby so that you may enter the banquet hall"

"This world is like the eve of Shabbat, and the Olam Ha-Ba is like the Shabbat. He who prepares on the eve of Shabbat will have food to eat on Shabbat"

There are NO specific teachings about the afterlife in the TORAH (the holiest Jewish Scriptures ~ GELND)

There are references to a physical place called SHEOL...a place to which one "goes down" following this life, but what this place will be like is left unclear. Many Jews make their own interpretations based on sacred texts.

WHAT DO JEWS BELIEVE ABOUT RESURRECTION?

Over the centuries, different Jewish Rabbi's have made a variety of interpretations about resurrection:



SOME RABBIS:

The Resurrection of the Dead will occur during the Messianic age.

OTHER RABBIS:

The Resurrection of the Dead will **follow** the Messianic Age

SOME RABBIS:

Only the good will be resurrected

OTHER RABBIS:

Everyone will be resurrected and then a Day of Judgement will follow

NAHMANIDES (12th Century rabbi)



Olam Ha-Ba would come after the resurrection of the dead. Those who had lived a good life would be given an additional life.

MAIMONIDES (12th C Jewish Philosopher)



Olam Ha-Ba is a time even beyond the resurrection of the world. The resurrected will die a second death and the souls of the good will enjoy a spiritual, bodiless existence with God

Most ORTHODOX

JEWS believe in Resurrection of some kind ~ this is highlighted in their prayers and at funerals.

SOME ORTHODOX

JEWS believe in BODILY resurrection and so forbid autopsies, cremation and organ donation as the body must be complete at resurrection.

SOME RABBIS:

There will be NO Day of Judgement ~ it is not necessary as there is a judgement every year at Rosh Hashanah!

Most REFORM JEWS have rejected resurrection and removed references from their prayers and worship.

SOME REFORM JEWS believe the soul lives on after death in a spiritual resurrection but are divided on where.

A small amount of Jews believe in REINCARNATION ~ the living another physical life on earth after death.

PRACTICES

Worship

Prayers can be said ANYWHERE in Judaism However...

...remember our work on Shekhinah...10 people must be present in worship for the Shekhinah to be present!

So...it is considered best in Judaism if a MINYAN (a group of ten worshippers) gathers in the synagogue to pray.

Also, communal prayers are believed to be less selfish than individual prayers

The Shabbat service is seen as the central point of communal worship for Jews

Shabbat services in the Synagogue

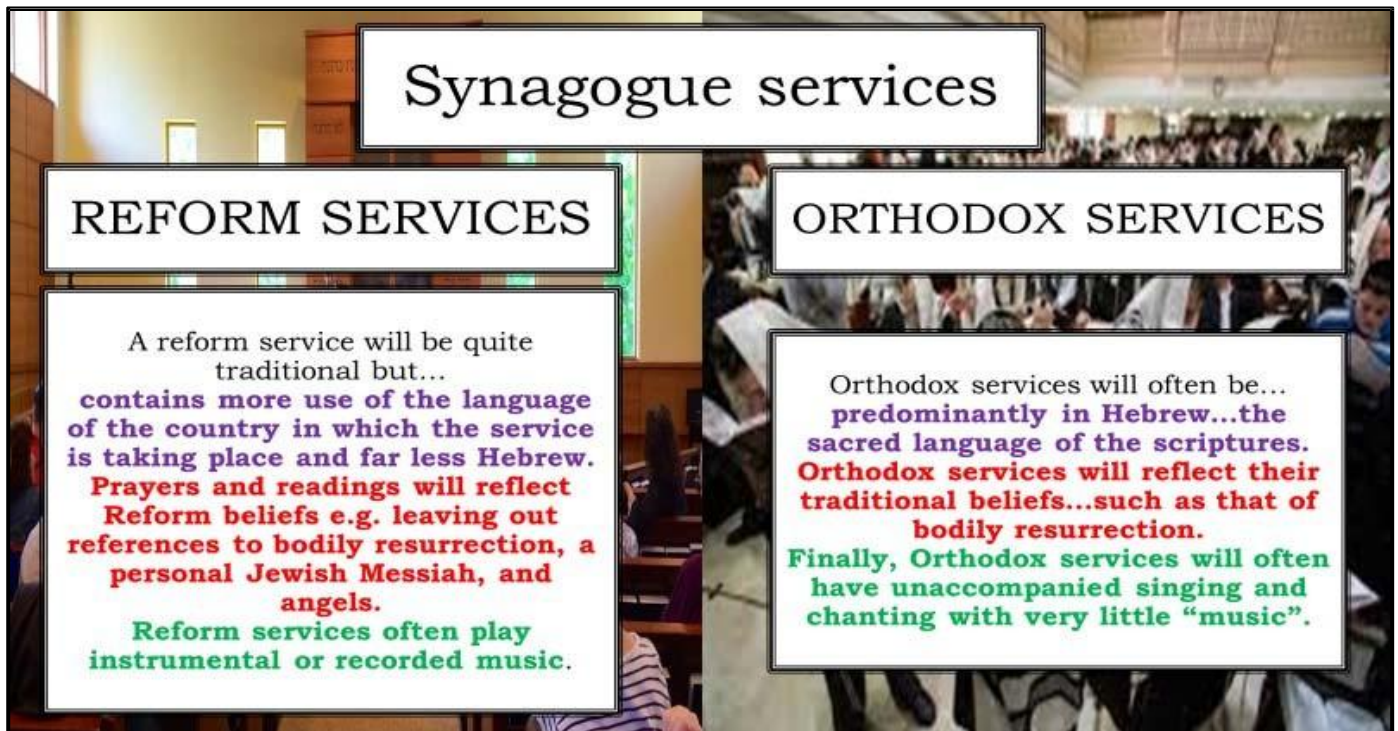
The Shabbat service brings the community together. Many Jews attend synagogue services on the Shabbat even if they do not do so during the week. Services are held on **Shabbat eve** (Friday night), **Shabbat morning** (Saturday morning) and **late Shabbat afternoon** (Saturday afternoon).

The Shabbat morning service is considered the central service for most Jews:

- It is the longest service of the week
- It includes the Shema prayer (remember...See "God is One")
 - It includes the AMIDAH prayer (more on this later)
 - It includes Kaddish...praises to God
- Passages from the prophets are read and a weekly sermon is given by the rabbi
- After the service, KIDDUSH is held (this is a special blessing held over a cup of wine)



Differences in Orthodox and Reform synagogue worship



Jewish Prayer

There are different types of prayer in Judaism:

- ❖ **Praising God** – This involves praising God for his qualities. By thinking of specific qualities of God such as justice, Jews think about the qualities they should aim for.
- ❖ **Requests of God** – These aren't just requests for what people want but what God thinks is best for them.
- ❖ **Thanksgiving** – These show gratitude for the life God has given and the blessings granted.

Most Jewish prayers are contained in a book called a SIDDUR

One really important Jewish prayer is called the AMIDAH and it is said at the Shabbat services.

It is referred to as;

1. The HaTeffilah (THE prayer) and
2. The Standing Prayer ~ as people stand throughout it because they are in God's presence.

It contains 18 blessings and contains all three types of prayer (requests, praise and thanksgiving). It is usually recited silently but in services is sometimes recited by the leader and the congregation respond "Amen" after each blessing.

One famous rabbi (Rabbi Halevi) once said:

"Prayer is for the soul what food is for the body"

Jewish worship in the home



It is of course expected that Jews will pray in the home and will say the Shema a number of times in the day ~ especially in the morning.

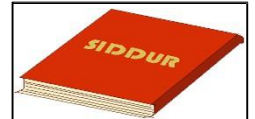
Jewish homes will have a PUSHKE BOX. This is a charity box. Giving to the poor is an act of justice ~ not charity!



Jewish homes will have a MEZUZAH on the right-hand door post and every doorpost in the home (except the bathroom). This is a small box that contains a tiny scroll with the Shema prayer written on it. The word "Shaddai" is written on the back...meaning "Almighty".



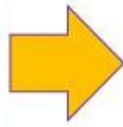
Jewish homes will have a SIDDUR ~ the Jewish prayer book containing all main prayers and blessings.



Shabbat

- This is considered by many Jews, the most important practice within Judaism.
- It is a gift from God when we don't need to think about weekday worries.
- It remembers both the day of rest during Creation AND the Jewish release from slavery in Egypt.
- Jews have kept Shabbat even in times of persecution.
- Nothing creative or destructive can be undertaken.
- Driving, cooking, watching TV and carrying anything between two locations is forbidden by Orthodox Jews.

Many Orthodox Jews abide by all Shabbat laws...including the forbidding of carrying or pushing any object in public on the Sabbath!



How is this even possible?!

In some areas, this has led Orthodox Jewish communities to construct an ERUV.

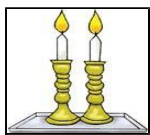
This is a special enclosure, allowed by Jewish Law, with set boundaries such as roads, rivers, hedges etc. If there are no natural boundaries, fence posts and wire can be used.



The ERUV is then considered an "enclosed area" within which prams and wheelchairs can be pushed on Shabbat and glasses, house keys etc can be carried to and from synagogue!



Shabbat in the Jewish home



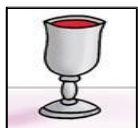
The woman of the family lights two candles to welcome Shabbat into the home as the evening falls.



The Jewish males will usually have been at synagogue and when they return, a meal will be eaten (it will have been prepared before Shabbat began)



The meal will begin with a blessing over two braided loaves called "Challah" ~ they symbolise the food from God eaten by the Jews in the desert during the Exodus.



At the beginning of the Shabbat meal, the KIDDUSH blessing is recited over a cup of wine ~ it is a symbol of joy and relaxation!

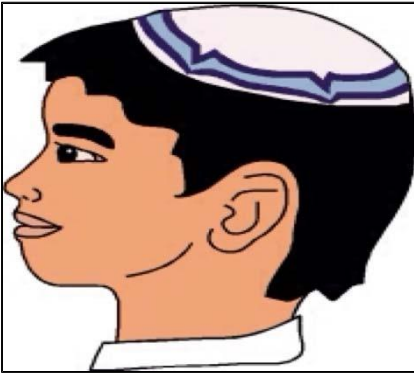


AT SUNSET ON SATURDAY (as Shabbat ends), the HAVDALAH candle is lit ~ a braided candle. It is a separation between Shabbat and the rest of the week. It is saying "goodbye" to Shabbat!



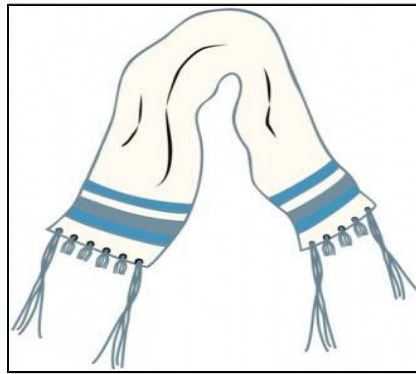
A cup of wine is then passed around the family and a SWEET SPICE IS SMELLED by everyone ~ this is to symbolise the hope of a sweet week ahead!

What do Jews wear for worship?



KIPPAH

This is a Jewish symbol of identity and a sign of respect for God. Some Jews wear the kippah all the time whereas others only wear it during worship.



TALLIT

A shawl-like garment with fringes attached (called tzitzit, representing the 613 mitzvot). The Torah refers to the duty of wearing fringes in the corners of clothes.

The TALLIT GADOL (large) is worn during prayer and worship and is sometimes wrapped around the body after death.

The TALLIT KATAN (small) is worn by orthodox Jews under normal clothing in everyday life.



TEFILLIN

These are worn by Orthodox Jewish males at morning prayer (except on Shabbat and festivals). One leather box is worn on the head (*tefillin shel rosh*) and contains 2 paragraphs of the Shema. The other is strapped to the arm (*tefillin shel yad*) and leans towards the heart.

We must serve God with our mind and heart.

The Synagogue

The purpose of the Jewish synagogue is three-fold:

A place of Worship "beit tefilah"	A place of study "beit midrash"	A place for social / community events
<p>It is where Jews will come to pray as a "minyan" so that the Shekhinah may be present</p> <p>Jews will sometimes come to pray here on a daily basis</p> <p>Prayer services are held here</p>	<p>Some Jews refer to synagogue as "shul", meaning "school".</p> <p>The study of sacred texts is a lifelong task...the study of these texts will usually take place in the synagogue.</p> <p>Jewish children will study RE in the synagogue.</p>	<p>The synagogue acts as a kind of "town hall" where community matters can be discussed.</p> <p>It will be the centre of charitable collections for the poor.</p> <p>There will be a calendar of social activities</p>

What problems are the synagogues facing?

FEWER RABBIS

Fewer people are willing to take on the role of Rabbi ~ especially as it remains quite a low paid position in many communities

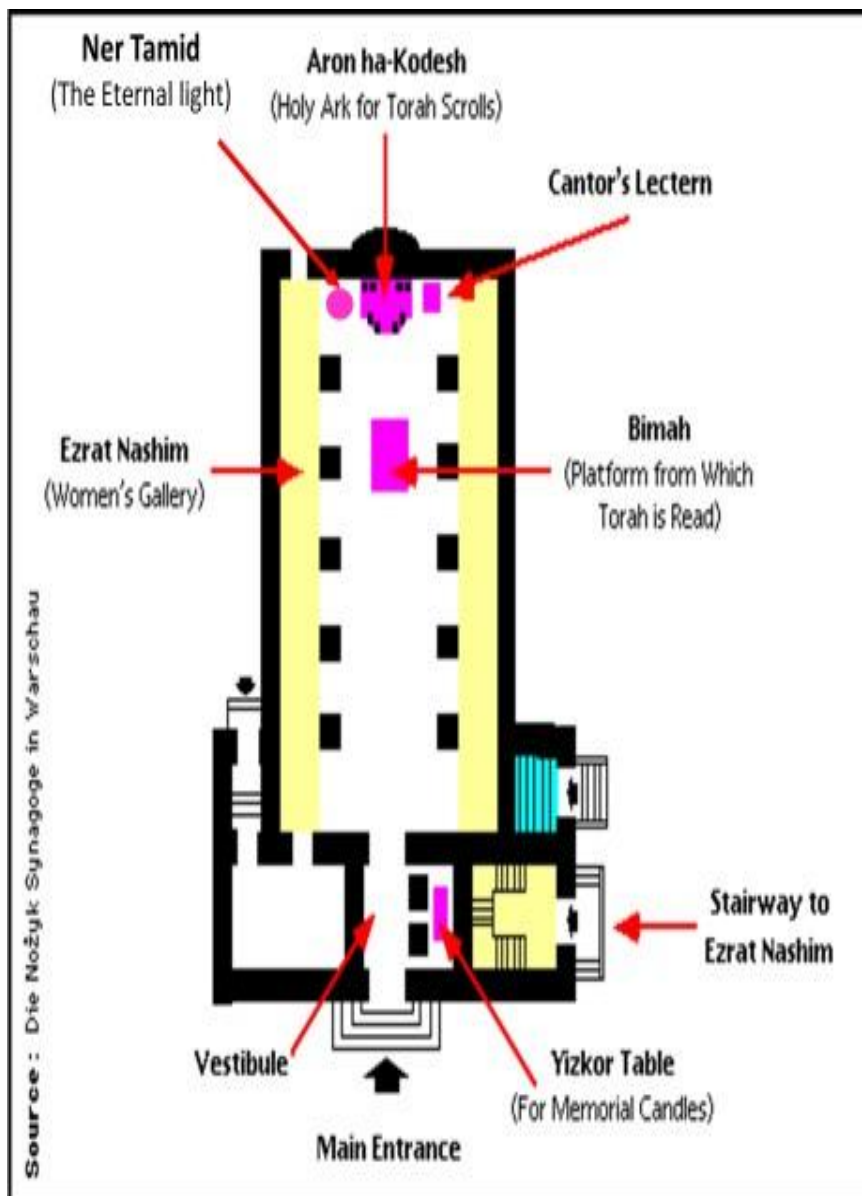
SECURITY

As with many churches, synagogues can be a target for vandalism and it can be costly to provide round the clock security. Some countries have even experienced terrorist attacks on synagogues

DECREASING WORSHIPPERS

There are decreasing worshippers in many areas with synagogues often being far larger than needed. There are also increasing numbers of elderly Jews who often cannot get to synagogue.

Features of a synagogue:



Aron Hakodesh: The most important part of the synagogue. This is the "Ark" where the Torah scrolls are kept. The ark doors may be opened or closed ~ but the opened doors represents the importance of the prayer.

Torah Scrolls: These are the most sacred thing in any synagogue. They are handwritten and made from animal skin. Each end of the scroll is stitched to a pole called the "Tree of Life". They are wrapped in silk or velvet.

Bimah: This is the central platform on which stands the desk from which the Torah scrolls are read. It is in the centre in an Orthodox synagogue and at the front in a Reform.

Ner Tamid: This is beside the Aron Hakodesh and is sometimes called the "eternal lamp". It is never extinguished. It represents God's eternal presence.

Women's seating (Ezrat Nashim): This is the main difference between Orthodox and Reform synagogues. The sexes **MUST** be completely separated in Orthodox worship but may mix in Reform.

Jewish Rituals

Jews observe many rituals throughout their lives, marking key events. Those you have studied are:

- Brit Milah (circumcision)
- Bar Mitzvah
- Bat Mitzvah
- Marriage
- Mourning rituals

Brit Milah



Brit Milah is the Hebrew term used to describe the religious circumcision of boys at 8 days old or of males converting to Judaism.

It is carried out by a **Mohel** (male) or in some Reform communities a **Mohelet** (female).

Circumcision involves the removal of the foreskin on the **8th day after birth**. It is performed in front of a **minyan** (a group of 10 worshippers ~ then Shekhinah is present)

The baby is placed on a cushion on an empty chair that is known as Elijah's chair. This represents an ancient belief that the spirit of Elijah visits every circumcision.

The child is then placed on the lap of the **Sandek**. A Sandek is someone chosen by the parents as a great honour.

After the circumcision, the father receives a blessing.

The circumcision represents the covenant made with Noah and Abraham (*remember...Noah was told by God to circumcise himself and all the males in his family to seal the covenant*).

During the Brit a prayer is said which shows the importance of the ceremony for a child's relation with God:

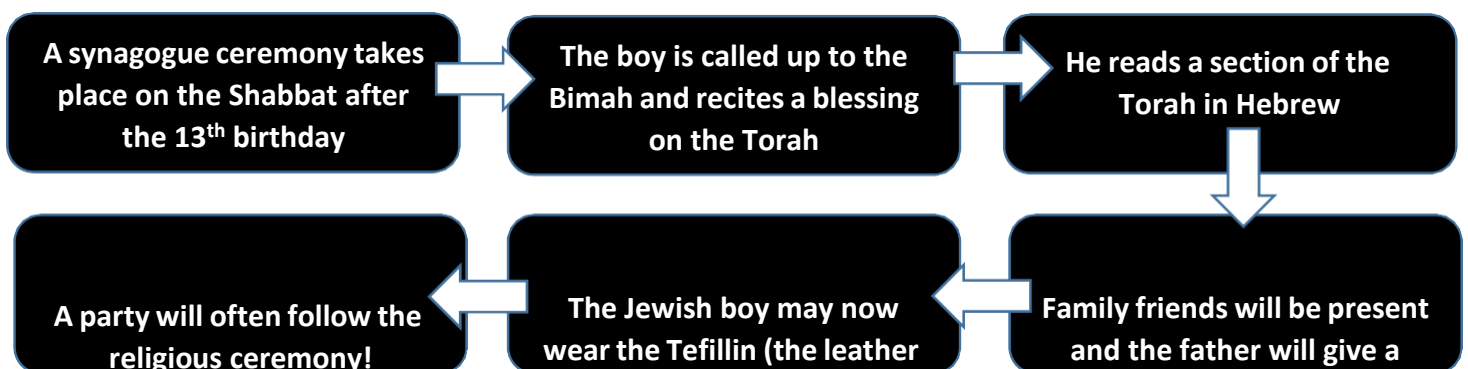
'That as this child has entered into the covenant, so may he enter into the Torah, the marriage canopy and into good deeds'

Bar Mitzvah



- Celebrated by Jewish males at the age of 13 ("entering adulthood")
- Can then form part of a minyan and is now expected to obey the Mitzvot in the Torah
- The term "Bar mitzvah" literally means "Son of the Commandments")
- The boy will have learned Hebrew so he can read from the Torah in the synagogue.

HOW IS IT CELEBRATED?



Bat Mitzvah & Bat Chayil

Jewish girls do not have the same adult responsibilities and so their ceremonies are not as large or as important!

BAT CHAYIL

Celebrated by Orthodox Jewish girls ~ it means “daughter of worth” and is celebrated at 12 years old. There will be a synagogue service and she will present what she has learned in her Jewish studies

BAT MITZVAH

Celebrated by Reform Jewish girls ~ it means “daughter of the Commandments” and is also celebrated at 12 years old. She may also join a Minyan at this age. There will usually be a synagogue service during Shabbat morning service where she may lead prayers and read from the Torah

Today, Jewish children often take on charitable acts after these celebrations to show they have a more responsible duty within the Jewish community.

Marriage

In the first book of the Torah (Genesis). It says

“A man shall leave his father and mother and be united with his wife, and they shall become one flesh” (Gen 2: 24)

Marriage is therefore considered very important in Judaism

There is an official BETROTHAL CEREMONY where the couple are promised to each other. This ceremony AND the first part of the marriage ceremony are referred to as

KIDDUSHIN
(MEANING “HOLY” OR “SANCTIFIED”)

The second part of the ceremony is referred to as

NISUIN
(THIS FINALISES THE MARRIAGE)

KETUBAH



THIS IS THE MARRIAGE CONTRACT made between the bride and groom. It is a legal document where the husband promises to support the wife. It remains the property of the wife throughout the marriage.

It is expected that the couple enter the marriage with good intentions ~ respect and faithfulness are demanded. It may take place in a synagogue, home or other venue. The rabbi will conduct the ceremony and the bride joins the groom and bridesmaids under the CHUPPAH ~ the marriage canopy. The CHUPPAH symbolises the Jewish home.

As the ring is placed on the bride's finger, the groom makes a declaration:
"behold, you are consecrated to me by means of this ring, according to the rituals of Moses and Israel".

He will also read out the promises he made in the KETUBAH (above).



At the end of the ceremony, a glass is stamped on. This may refer to the fact that marriage is fragile, but it may also symbolise the destruction of the Jewish Temple.

In Judaism, weddings are referred to as "SIMCHAS" ~ joyous occasions!
As in Christianity, the ring is a symbol of eternity!

On the second part of the wedding ~ the NISUIN ~ 7 blessings are given, praising God for his creation, and asking for happiness to be brought on the couple.

Mourning Rituals

The rituals followed at death depend very much on the individuals and the type of Judaism they follow.

AT DEATH:

If possible, it is ideal that a person's last moments should be spent reciting the SHEMA prayer.



CHEVRA KADISHA:

This is the burial society which is attached to the synagogue. They will prepare the body for burial. The body is washed and dressed in plain white gowns. Those who perform this are volunteers and take great care as Jews believe THE BODY IS THE EARTHLY CONTAINER FOR THE SOUL and so should be treated with great dignity.

AFTER DEATH:

The funeral is arranged by the ONAN (the main mourner). At this point, THEY ARE EXEMPT FROM ALL MITZVOT except for preparing for the burial. In Judaism, a body should not be left alone and so someone will stay with the body until burial.

BURIAL:

Jews tend to bury rather than cremate bodies. This should be done as soon as possible. The funeral is plain and simple. The coffin is unpolished with no brass handles to show that everyone is equal in death. Blessings are given and a memorial prayer is said. SOME Orthodox Jews walk around the coffin 7 times and pray for the Angel of Mercy to accompany the coffin.

SHIVA:

The first week after the funeral is known as SHIVA (meaning seven). During this week, the mourners will stay in their homes. Male mourners will recite KADDISH ~ a prayer declaring God's greatness.

Some mourners will sit on low stools during Shiva, however, on Shabbat, no mourning is to take place. During mourning, Jews cover mirrors and music cannot be played. A candle is kept burning day and night to represent the dead parson's soul;

"A person's soul is the candle of the Lord" (Proverbs 20: 27)

The end of Shiva is NOT the end of mourning. For four weeks (the "Shloshim"), parties must be avoided and the hair is not to be cut.



The tombstone is to be erected before the end of the first year after death. This ceremony is called "The Unveiling". Stones, NOT flowers are left by visitors to the grave. This may date back to Abraham marking the spot of Sarai's grave with a pebble.

A YAHRZEIT ceremony is held each year to mark the death when prayers are said and a candle burns for 24 hours.

Jewish Daily Life

Scripture is extremely important in the everyday life of a Jew. We already know that the Torah contains all the Jewish Laws that must be observed throughout their life but other scriptures are also key in daily life:

The TENAKH is the name of the 24 books of Jewish scriptures. This consists of three things:

- THE TORAH (the 5 most holy books ~ Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers and Deuteronomy)
- NEVIIM (the books of the prophets)
- KETUVIM (holy writings, including the Psalms)

In addition to The Tenakh is the TALMUD. This is made up of two things:

- MISHNAH ~ for centuries, the teachings of Judaism were passed down by word of mouth (The Oral Torah). When Jews moved around the Roman Empire, these teachings were written down.
- GEMARA ~ This gives further details on The Mishnah, explaining and guiding.

Jewish Daily Life: KOSHER LAWS

KOSHER means **fit and proper according to Jewish Law** ~ it can be used to refer to certain actions but most frequently refers to food and diet.



The opposite of “Kosher” is **“TREIFAH”** which is a word to describe **actions and foods that are forbidden!**

LEVITICUS 11: 1-23 refers to many issues of keeping KOSHER and is still used by many Jews today.

Forbidden foods are:

- Many types of birds
 - Shellfish
- Fish without fins and scales
- Animals that don't chew the cud or have hooves that are completely parted

Animals that ARE allowed to be eaten must be killed and cooked in a certain way.

Judaism forbids causing unnecessary pain to animals and so the throat is cut with a razor-sharp knife, causing immediate lack of consciousness and death. This method is called:

schechitah

The person performing this act is called a **SHOCHET** and they are expected to live a good and honourable Jewish life. The blood is then drained as the Torah forbids eating animal blood.

EXODUS 23: 19 states:

“Bring the best of your first fruits of the soil to the house of the Lord. Do not cook a young goat in its mother's milk”

Therefore, Jews do not mix meat and dairy products and will not eat them in the same meal. There are some foods that can be eaten with any meal and they include:

- ✓ Vegetables
- ✓ Eggs
- ✓ Plants
- ✓ Fish

Jewish Festivals

THERE ARE FOUR FESTIVALS THAT YOU WILL NEED TO KNOW FOR YOUR EXAM:

- 🚩 Rosh Hashanah
- 🚩 Yom Kippur
- 🚩 Pesach
- 🚩 Sukkot

Rosh Hashanah

This is Jewish New Year and is followed ten days later by Yom Kippur (the Day of Atonement).

Jews believe that on Rosh Hashanah, God judges people for their past deeds and writes this down in a book ~ the book is then sealed on Yom Kippur!



ORIGINS & MEANING	CELEBRATION
<p>It traditionally celebrates the Creation of the World.</p> <p>“Rosh” means “head” and refers to the direction the new year will take.</p> <p>It is linked closely to judgement and urges us to repent of our past sins.</p> <p>It is a serious festival where Jews consider how they could have lived better lives.</p>	<p>Special services are held at synagogue on the eve of Rosh Hashanah.</p> <p>The SHOFAR (horn) will be blown</p> <p>Special fruits are bought</p> <p>Jews wish each other “May you be written down for a good year”.</p> <p>Slices of apple are dipped in honey and a challah loaf is eaten (this is circular at Rosh Hashanah as a symbol of the cycle of the year).</p> <p>In the morning service, the shofar is blown 100 times with notes that sound like crying ~ we implore God to unite our souls with Him.</p> <p>Finally, many Jews will pray at a running stream and cast crumbs into the water as we hope to cast our sins away!</p>

THE TEN DAYS OF RETURNING

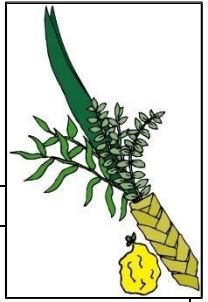
In the 10 days between Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur, Jews consider past deeds. They make amends with those they’ve wronged and plan to do better next year. Judaism teaches that in order for God to forgive us, we must seek forgiveness from others.

Yom Kippur



ORIGINS & MEANING	CELEBRATION
<p>This is <u>the holiest day of the Jewish Year!</u></p> <p>It is an end to the 10 days of repentance</p> <p>It is a day of forgiveness</p> <p>It requires <u>self-denial</u> in 5 areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Food ▪ Wearing perfumes ▪ Drinking ▪ Sex ▪ Wearing leather shoes 	<p>The day before Yom Kippur is a day of preparation ~ charitable works are often undertaken</p> <p>Yom Kippur begins in the home with an early dinner to allow for attendance at synagogue before sundown.</p> <p>Yom Kippur is <u>a 25 hour fast</u> where many Jews abstain from ANY food or water ~ those who are ill or vulnerable need not fast (Remember Pikuach Nefesh?)</p> <p>The story of Jonah is told in the synagogue ~ telling of <u>God's willingness to forgive those who fully repent.</u></p> <p>The Torah scrolls are "dressed" in white, as is the rabbi ~ a colour of forgiveness.</p> <p><u>The doors of the ark are open</u> to show the gates of heaven are open.</p> <p>Confessions are quietly made to God</p> <p>The <u>YIZKOR</u> is a service at Yom Kippur which remembers the dead.</p> <p>After nightfall, a single blast of the shofar announces an end to the fast and families make <u>HAVDALAH</u> (see the section on Shabbat).</p> <p>Traditionally, during the evening, children start to make their SUKKAH (a hut), ready for the festival of SUKKOT</p>

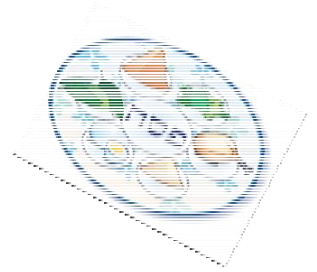
Sukkot

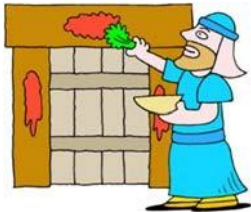


ORIGINS & MEANING	CELEBRATION
<p>Sukkot begins on TISHRI 15 (the fifth day after Yom Kippur)</p> <p>It is an important festival and is included in the Mitzvot that Jews should keep.</p> <p>It is a HARVEST FESTIVAL</p> <p>It remembers the Jews during the 40-year Exodus living in temporary shelters in the wilderness.</p> <p>Certain items have become associated with the festival of Sukkot that are referred to in Leviticus (in the Torah) ~ these items have become known as THE FOUR SPECIES:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The LULAV (A frond from a palm tree) The MYRTLE (An evergreen shrub) The WILLOW (another plant) The ETROG (a citrus fruit) <p><u>Some Jews say</u> that the Four Species represent different parts of the body that could sin but should unite against sin:</p> <p>LULAV ~ the spine ~ your actions MYRTLE ~ the eye ~ how you see life WILLOW ~ the mouth ~ your speech ETROG ~ the heart ~ your emotions</p> <p><u>Other Jews say</u> that the Four Species represent different Jews:</p> <p>ETROG ~ Jews who know the Torah and perform Mitzvot (pleasing taste and smell) LULAV ~ Jews who know the Torah but lack Mitzvot (tasty fruit but no scent) MYRTLE ~ Jews who perform Mitzvot but know little of the Torah (strong scent but no taste) WILLOW ~ Jews with no knowledge of the Torah and who don't perform Mitzvot (no taste or scent)</p>	<p>Sukkot lasts for 7 days</p> <p>No work is allowed on the first and second day of the festival</p> <p>Jewish families build a SUKKAH (a temporary shelter)</p> <p>The roof of the shelter MUST be made from something that has grown from the ground (such as bamboo)</p> <p>The roof is called a SEKHAKH and must be sparse enough that the rain can get through and that the stars can be seen.</p> <p>Jews differ in how much they “dwell” in the Sukkah during the festival ~ some sleep and eat in it, others may just eat meals in it and sleep in the house.</p> <p>On each morning of Sukkot (except Shabbat), people put the lulav in their right hand and recite a blessing to God. The lulav and Etrog are waved in 6 directions:</p> <p>Front (towards Jerusalem) Right Back Left Up Down</p> <p>This is representing that God's power is EVERYWHERE!</p> <p>Many synagogues will also have a Sukkah</p>



Pesach



ORIGINS & MEANING	CELEBRATION
<p>Celebrates the release of the Jewish people from slavery in Egypt</p> <p>Also known as “Passover”</p> <p>God commanded that Jews celebrate this festival every year as a mark of freedom:</p> <p><i>“This day must be one that you will remember. You must keep it as a festival to God for all generations. It is a law for all time that you must celebrate it”. (Exodus 12: 14)</i></p> <p>It is sometimes referred to as the Festival of Freedom. Prayers are said each year for those who are not free.</p> 	<p>In preparation, Jews <u>remove all grain products from their houses</u> (called “chametz”). They are not allowed to be eaten during the festival.</p> <p><u>Leavened goods</u> (containing yeast), such as <u>bread, beer and oats are also removed from the house</u> and Jews thoroughly clean to remove even the smallest crumb!</p> <p>This custom is linked to the Israelites not having time to allow their bread to rise as they left Egypt.</p> <p><u>Candles are lit</u> to welcome Pesach.</p> <p>The family goes to the <u>synagogue</u></p> <p>A special meal is held called the <u>Seder Meal</u>. There are many symbolic foods on the table:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ A lamb-bone ~ a symbol of the lamb that was sacrificed ❖ A boiled egg ~ a symbol of new life ❖ A green vegetable dipped in salt water ~ to symbolise the tears of the Jews in slavery ❖ Bitter herbs ~ symbolising the bitterness of slavery ❖ Charoset ~ a paste of apples, walnuts and wine ~ representing the mortar the slaves used in building <p><u>UNLEAVENED BREAD</u> is eaten, again as a reminder that their ancestors didn’t even have time to allow their bread to rise. The bread is called <u>MATZAH</u>.</p> <p>4 glasses of wine are drunk symbolising joy and one glass of wine is left for the <u>Prophet Elijah who will return to announce the coming of the Messiah</u>.</p>