

# RE Knowledge organiser Y10 1a Judaism



- ✓ Worship- Public and private
- ✓ The synagogue in daily life
- ✓ Family life
- ✓ The sabbath/Shabbat
- ✓ Kosher-kashrut-Jewish food law
- ✓ Tenakh and Talmud

# Worship



Worship is an important part of most religions because it is a time to focus on God, to thank Him and to show your commitment. It gives people a chance to take some time out of their day so it can have a calming effect, and allows them to tell their worries to God. King David would worship with such commitment and devotion that his wife was even embarrassed by him and called him 'undignified.' This teaches Jews to always worship God and not care what others think of you for doing it.

## PUBLIC vs PRIVATE

**Public** – This is when you worship with others, most commonly at the Synagogue. The advantages are that you will feel part of the community, learn how to do it properly and shows commitment. Also some prayers cannot be done unless there are 10 male Jews present, meaning a count (minyan) has to be done. On the other hand it can sometimes be difficult to get there at certain times if you are busy.

**PRIVATE** – This is when you worship at home on your own. Some would say that you do not need to go into a religious building to follow your religion and that as God is everywhere you can do it anywhere. However, it can be harder to follow your religion if you do not have the support of your community, and some prayers cannot be said on your own.

## Diversity within Judaism

Orthodox and non-orthodox/Reform Jews may worship in different ways:

Orthodox do not allow women to read the Torah, get Bat Mitzvahs, or become a Rabbi. They cover their heads and sit separately. Also the person leading the service faces the Ark not the people, speaks only in Hebrew and will only use their voice to worship God. Reform Jews believe that you should move with the times so will allow women to become Rabbis, read Torah and sit together. The service may be more relaxed, is shorter and in English, and may use music or technology such as microphones.

## Religious Objects

Jews will use various things as part of their worship including:

- **Teffillin** - Using leather straps they will fix a small box called a Tefillin to their head and left arm. This is because it says in the Torah in the Shema that they should wear them as a sign to others and as a way of remembering God - '*Bind them as a sign on your arm and between your eyes.*' The 4 passages of Torah that say this will be placed inside the box.
- **Tallit** - They will also make sure they are wearing a prayer shawl called a tallit. This has special tied fringes in all 4 corners (called Tzitzit). There are 613 to represent all of the mitzvahs (rules) and are the most important part of the shawl.
- **Kippah** - A prayer cap called a Kippah which covers their head as a sign of respect to God. Religious Jews may wear this all the time, but others may wear it just when they are praying or inside the Synagogue.
- **Yad** - They will read sections of the Torah every week using a Yad which means 'hand' because it has a finger which points at the words to avoid touching it.



# Key Prayers in Judaism

Jews are meant to pray 3 times a day, but the morning prayer is the most important. That is why they will wear all the religious objects at the morning prayers except the kippah which they always wear.



## HEMA

The most important prayer, the Shema will be said everyday which says 'Hear Israel, the Lord your God, the Lord is one.' They cover their hands as they say this to help them focus completely on the words. It is very important because it teaches them that there is only one God (called monotheism). In this prayer it also tells them to:

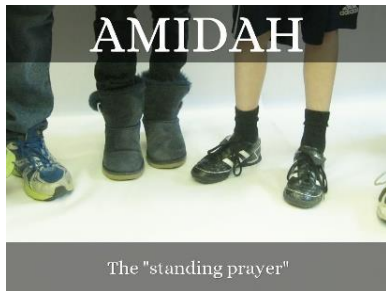
- Impress the rules onto their children
- Talk about the rules when they walk or sit at home
- Write the rules on their head and arm (which they do through the Tefilin)
- Write the rules onto their gates or doorposts (which they do through the Mezuzah)

## 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 YOU  
TODAY ARE TO BE ON YOUR HEARTS  
**IMPRESS THEM ON  
YOUR CHILDREN**

Talk about them when you  
sit at home and when you  
walk along the road;  
WHEN YOU LIE DOWN AND WHEN YOU GET  
UP, TIE THEM AS SYMBOLS ON YOUR HANDS  
AND BIND THEM ON YOUR FOREHEADS.  
Write them on the  
doorframes of your houses  
and on your gates.  
DEUTERONOMY SIX FOUR THROUGH NINE

## AMIDAH



The "standing prayer"

## Amidah

The Amidah literally means 'standing' and it is another key important prayer that they say every day. They say it silently because God knows their thoughts, whilst standing up and is made up of 18 blessings. It is split into 3 sections – it always starts with praising God, then there is a time of petition (asking God for things) then ends with thanks for everything he has already done. At certain times such as Yom Kippur they say an extended version.

## Aleinu

This is a short prayer that is said at the end of all acts of worship at the Synagogue. It talks about how God is king over all the earth, and some Jews will bow as they say this. In one part of the prayer they thank God for making the Jews different from everyone else and a special people unlike the others who pray to a God that cannot save. This has caused anger from other groups in the past and was even banned during the Middle Ages when Jews were persecuted.



**Aleinu** עלינו



## Kaddish

This is the prayer for the dead. It is said at the funeral, then 3 times a day throughout Shiva (the first week of mourning), then once a day throughout Shana (the year of mourning). Despite being the prayer for the dead it does not actually mention death, or the family, or anything to do with sadness and bereavement. Instead the whole prayer is about praising God for how wonderful He is. This is to remind mourners that even in difficult times they should praise God.

## Kiddush

This is a special prayer done over a cup of wine every week at Shabbat (Sabbath). It is also said at every holy day such as Yom Kippur and Pesach. It will be said by the head of the household whilst holding a special cup. The word Kiddush literally means 'holiness' and it is a way of showing that they are entering into a sacred time.



# Synagogue

## History

Originally there was just one Temple in Jerusalem (Israel) and the Jews believed that this was where God lived. In the Temple was a separate area behind a curtain called the Holy of Holies where God's Shekinah (presence) lived. In the Holy of Holies was the Ark of the Covenant which contained significant objects such as the tablets of stone the 10 Commandments were written on. When the Temple was destroyed for the second time many communities set up small, local places to pray and learn about their religion. These are called Synagogues and exist in almost every country in the world. They now believe that God's shekinah (presence) can be in the Synagogues and will be there when ever 10 or more Jewish males gather together. This is why Jews do a minyan (meaning 'count') at the start of worship to check there are enough adult males to do certain prayer. For Reform Jews women can be included in the Minyan too.

## Key Features of a Synagogue

Men and women sit separately and women cover their head in an Orthodox synagogue, although this is different in a Reformed one

- **Aron Hakodesh (Ark)** – cupboard at the front which is the holiest part containing the Torah Scrolls
- **Ner Tamid** – the 'eternal light' representing God's shekinah (presence) which hangs above the Ark
- **Bimar** – platform used for resting the Torah on when it is being read
- **Siddur** – main prayer book will be around for people to read
- **The Rabbi** who leads the services and the **Cantor** who leads the singing may have chairs at the front

**Many of these key features are important because they remind the Jews of the early Temple, so they symbolise different things.**



The Synagogue is important because it:

- Allows them to learn about their religion which is why some people call it 'Biet Midrash' meaning 'House of Study'. It is also referred to as Shul meaning school.
- Houses the Torah Scrolls and the Tenakh
- Allows them to have important services such as Bar Mitzvah, Brit Millah, Weddings
- Gives them a chance to meet with other Jewish friends and be a part of the community which is why some people call it 'Beit K'nesset' meaning 'House of Assembly'



## Star of David

The Star of David (Magen David) is the symbol of Judaism and can be seen in all Synagogues. It represents the shield of King David who was their most important King.



## Key words

Shekinah - the presence of God  
Temple - the building in Jerusalem which was destroyed (twice!) and cannot be rebuilt  
Synagogue - a local place of worship for Jews that you will find all over the world in every community

# THE ROLE OF THE FAMILY

Throughout Jewish history the family has always been central to the religion; remember Judaism started not as a race or group of people but as Abraham's family. Many of the key elements about how to be a Jew are taught within the home, with the mother and father having different roles and responsibilities. Some people even argue that the home is more important than the Synagogue for learning to be a Jew because it gives practical teachings about all aspects of life. For example, in the home you are taught how to follow all the laws which effect every aspect of life.

## Examples of why & how the home is so important –

- The family is even symbolised in the wedding ceremony through the chuppah that they stand underneath, showing the importance of the family home.
- Key festivals such as Passover are celebrated in the home and all have an important place for children (for example they have to ask questions and hunt for the Matzah flat bread)
- The Brit Millah was traditionally done in the home
- The 10 Commandments even mentions the family, saying 'Honour your father and mother.'
- It is the mothers job to teach her child all the kosher food laws
- The father will teach them how to pray (using tallit and tefillin properly)
- They will learn to read and study the Torah with their parents (perhaps in preparation for their Bar Mitzvah)
- When someone dies the mourning rituals happen within the home
- Each house has reminders to obey God's commandments such as the Mezuzah. This is a small box which contains hand written scroll of the Torah. This will be fixed to their outside door post.



## **Shabbat Meal**

One of the most important times for Jews to be in the home together is Friday night when the Sabbath or Shabbat starts. They celebrate this by having a big meal together without any distractions such as TV or phones. They use this time to talk about their week and to play games or go on walks together. This is another reason that the home is so important in Judaism.

## **My Reasoned Opinion is..**

## **Key words**

Chuppa - a small tent like covering the bride and groom stand under in a Jewish marriage ceremony  
Synagogue - the Jewish place of worship  
Tallit - the prayer shawl  
Tefillin - the boxes which Jews strap to their head and arms with leather straps during prayers  
Shabbat - also known as Sabbath, the Jewish holy day

# Laws for Life



For many people rules are something which are seen as being negative and annoying. For Jews the laws they must follow are a blessing and a happy thing because they set them apart from everyone else and prove that they are God's chosen people. There are a total of 613 rules, or Mitzvah that they must follow which cover every area of life, from what to wear, eat, say, and do. The key rules are the 10 Commandments which some say all the other 613 fit into. Two key categories are:

- mitzvah between man and God, such as 'Don't worship false idols'
- mitzvah between man and man, such as 'Do not kill.'

## Sabbath

In the 10 Commandments it says '*you must keep the Sabbath day holy*' which means that all Jews rest on the Sabbath or Shabbat, which for them is the Saturday. This is also important because in the creation story in Genesis it says that even God made the world in 6 days and then rested on the 7<sup>th</sup> so they must do the same. There are lots of rules about what counts as work on this day, including things like cooking, writing, using technology and even how many steps they can take. It is a day for spending time with family and visiting the Synagogue. It starts with a big family meal on Friday night, when the women light the candles and the Kiddush is said.

As well as spending time with family it is also important to spend time focused on God. Many Jews visit the Synagogue on the Sabbath where there will be special services on Friday evening or on the Saturday morning which may be more family focused. The end of the Sabbath is marked with a ceremony called the Havdalah

## Kosher Food

There are many rules which control what Jews can eat. Foods which are allowed are called kosher and include all fruit and veg, chicken, beef and fish. However, it must be killed in the correct way with its blood being drained by slitting its throat, because it says in the Torah '*do not eat the blood with the flesh of an animal.*' Also the meat cannot be eaten at the same time as any dairy product. This is because in the Torah it says '*Do not cook a kid (baby animal) in its mother's milk.*' This means things like cheeseburgers and pepperoni pizzas are not allowed. Some foods are banned completely such as pig and seafood because they are seen as unclean (trefah). Jews will use Kosher butchers and also look at the markings on the back of food products to check if they are unsure.

These rules are important to Jews because:

- It is clearly stated in the Torah that they must not eat certain things
- It is part of their covenant with God
- It shows that they are the chosen people



## **A different Jewish View...**

Some Jews such as Reformed Jews may not follow all these rules as strictly as Orthodox Jews. They may believe that they are out-dated as the way we live has changed from when the Torah was written. For example, they may argue that many of the food laws were in place to protect them at a time when there was poor hygiene, which is no longer a big issue.

## **Key words**

**Mitzvah/Mitzvot** - rules or laws  
**Sabbath/Shabbat** - the Holy day of rest (Saturday for Jews)  
**Kosher** - food which is fit to eat  
**Trefah** - food which is unclean  
**Kiddush** - blessing over the wine on the Sabbath meal

# TaNakh

Ta=Torah  
Na=Nebium  
Kh=Kethubim

## TANAKH (Old Testament)

TORAH  
PROPHETS  
WRITINGS

# TENAKH & TALMUD

The Jewish scripture is called the Tenakh which is made up of 3 different sections:

- 1) **The Torah scrolls** – the most well known part, which is the first 5 books
- 2) **The Nevi'im** - are stories and teachings from many different prophets (God's messengers)
- 3) **Ketuvim** – Other various writings including poems, songs and other historical documents.

These are also the Christian Old Testament which is the first half of their Bible. For Jews, the whole Tenakh must be read over the year, so it is split into small sections to ensure it is all covered.

## Talmud

This is a huge amount of information about the Torah, from various Rabbis and traditions that were passed down orally for many years. They include various teachings from different men, and explanations on how to follow all the Mitzvahs properly.

Within the Talmud is something called the Mishnah which is the first written version of the oral law. It also contains something called the Gemara which is peoples writings about the Mishna. So the Talmud is made up of the Mishnah and the Gemara.

## Teachings From the Talmud

The Talmud is sometimes criticised for saying offensive things about non-Jews (called Gentiles) and homosexuals. However, Jews argue that most religious Holy Books have similar comments because of the times in which they were all written.

## My Reasoned Opinion is..

## Key words

**Torah** - the first 5 books

**Tenakh** - the whole of the Jewish holy scriptures (including the Torah, Ketuvim and Nevi'im)

**Talmud** - a separate book containing explanation by different Rabbis about all the teachings in the Tenakh

**Mishnah and Gemara** - parts of the Talmud  
**Oral Law** - the Talmud before it was written down