

RE Knowledge organiser Y10 1b Judaism



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Passover



Moses was originally born to a Jewish family but in an effort to save his life after soldiers started killing all the babies his mother sent him down the river in a basket. Found by the Pharaoh's wife he was raised as a prince until God spoke to him through a burning bush and gave him a mission – to make the Pharaoh release all the Jewish slaves. *'Let my people go!'*

When the Pharaoh refused God sent 10 plagues, each one worse than the last. The final plague, death of all the first born sons finally caused the Pharaoh to release them after thousands died including his own son. The Jews however were saved by putting lamb's blood over their door causing the spirit of death to 'pass over' their house. The next day they left in such a hurry that their bread had not even risen! However, Pharaoh then changed his mind and tried to recapture them. God parted the Red Sea so Moses could lead them to freedom. However, they spent 40 years in the desert where life became very difficult and they started behaving in a way that made God angry. They were stealing, murdering and even started to lose their faith in God. As a result, God then gave Moses the 10 Commandments which were to be their key rules to help them know how to behave.

MODERN DAY PASSOVER (PESACH)

Every year Jews remember the story of Exodus and how God saved them from slavery through celebrating Passover. (Pesach in Hebrew). It reminds them that they are God's chosen people and that God protects them and is omnipotent. It also teaches them that they must obey His orders like the Jews in the Exodus story (both by putting the blood over their doors) and that they must never lose faith (they had to wait for 400 years as slaves!). During Passover the whole family will get together for a big meal where Moses' story will be told from a book called the Haggadah. They leave an empty space for a famous prophet called Elijah and even open the door for him. Flat, unrisen bread called matzot will be hidden for children to hunt, and there will be a Seder plate which will contain various symbolic foods including:

- An egg to symbolise new life
- a bone to symbolise the lamb that was killed for its blood
- Salt water to symbolise the tears of the slaves
- Maror - bitter herbs to remind them how bitter life was
- Karpas – green vegetables
- Charoset which is apple, honey and nuts which symbolises the cement from their days building as slaves, and to show that life will also be a mix of sweetness and struggle.



Second Covenant

Although God made the first covenant with Abraham, he then made a second covenant with Moses hundreds of years later when he rescued them from slavery.

Key words

Pesach - Hebrew word for Passover (festival that remembers the Exodus)

Exodus - the story of the Jews escape from slavery

Seder Plate - A large plate containing symbolic foods to remind them of parts of the Exodus story

Haggadah - the book that contains the Exodus story

Matzot - flat bread

Elijah - an important prophet they think will return

Rosh Hashanah

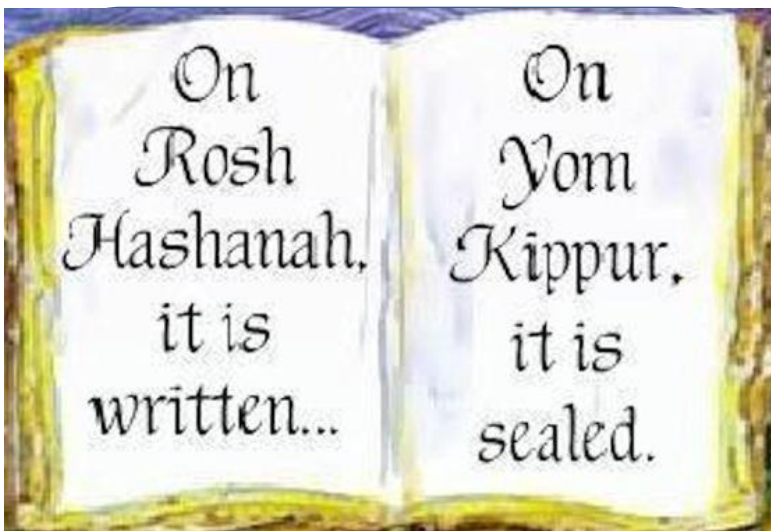


Rosh Hashanah

Rosh means 'the head,' and shana means 'year,' so it is the Jewish new year. They celebrate when God made the world but more importantly it is when God judges the world. He does this by opening the 'book of life' and weighing up every human's good and bad deeds that year. If you have been good enough then your name goes into the book of life and you will be rewarded. This could mean you have a good next year or even go to heaven when you die. However if you have done evil then you will be 'blotted out of the book of the living forever' meaning you will be punished. From Rosh Hashana you have 10 days until Yom Kippur which is when the book is closed, during which time you can change your judgement if you improve your behaviour and repent (say sorry).



To celebrate Rosh Hashanah Jews will have a family meal where they use various symbolic foods. These include apples dipped in honey so they have a sweet new year, and special round bread to symbolise the cycle of the years. A big part of the festival is also blowing the shofar, which is meant to awaken and warn people. They also do Tashlikh which is when they throw pebbles or bread into rivers/lakes as a way of getting rid of their sin, saying '*You cast all their sins into the depth of the seas.*' They may also tell the story of Jonah and the Whale to remind them selves how God is very forgiving because he rescued Jonah even though he tried to run away from God.



Key words

Rosh Hashanah - Jewish new year when God's book is opened to judge people
Shofar - a special horn used in Jewish worship
Judgement - when God decides if you have been good or bad
Tashlikh - Throwing things into water to represent getting rid of your sins

Yom Kippur



Yom Kippur

This comes 10 days after Rosh Hashanah and is the final day of judgement when God closes his book of life for another year. It literally means 'day of atonement' because you hope that over the last 10 days you have done enough repenting to be forgiven. Thousands of years ago it used to be the one day in the year that the Priest was allowed to enter the Holy of Holies in the Temple where they believed God's shekinah lived, in order to pray for a good judgement for the people. As there is no longer a Temple in Jerusalem it means that now all Jews have to make up for their sins themselves instead of having a priest do it for them.

Nowadays it is the most holy day, and many people will spend it in the Synagogue praying or giving to charity. They will also not wash, wont wear leather, wont have sex and will wear white to show they are pure. It is a complete day of rest and in Israel every shop is closed and every road is empty. It is called the 'Shabbat of Shabbats' and seen as the most holy day of the year.

ALL
THESE VOWS

Kol Nidre

Kol Nidre

Yom Kippur lasts 25 hours and starts with a special service called Kol Nidre which means 'all vows.' Here they all stand and ask that all promises that they make over the next year will be null and voided, meaning gotten rid of. This is in case they accidentally forget them and get into trouble.

Yom Kippur closing service

The 25 hours ends with a second service which is the most important moment of the year. Even Jews who do not normally go to the Synagogue will attend this one! They say a longer version of the Amidah (standing prayer) where they knock on their chests as they confess their sins. They will read the story of when the Priest went behind the curtain into the Holy of Holies, and may even bow when they get to certain parts. There is then the 'locking' when they ask that as the gates of heaven are being locked they be on the inside. It ends with all the Jews shouting 'Next year in Jerusalem' and blowing the shofar again.



Key words

Yom Kippur - final day for judgement when the book is closed

Kol Nidre - means all vows and is the special service at the start of Yom Kippur

Shofar - a special horn used in Jewish worship

Atonement - when a broken relationship is fixed and you are forgiven

B'rit Milah

HISTORY

God's first covenant with the Jews started with Abraham. God said that He would protect them and give them land (Israel) and many descendants (children) on the condition that they followed all His rules. One of these was that Abraham had to circumcise himself, his children and all the men in his household/tribe. Today Jews still do this as a way of continuing the covenant.

WHY ELSE DO IT?

Jews also get circumcised because:

- They want to follow and obey God's rules
- It is tradition
- It is a physical way of showing they belong to the Jewish community
- They are proud to be one of God's chosen people

Some non-Jewish people also do it because they may argue that it is cleaner but this is opinion.

HOW IS IT DONE?

It is done at a special service called the 'B'rit Milah' which used to be in the home but can also be done at the Synagogue. The Godfather blesses the boy and puts him on a special chair. The father reads something accepting his responsibility for the child. The Mohel cuts around the skin and removes it – it must draw blood. Everyone prays that the boy will grow to study the Torah, have a good marriage and do good deeds. The Mohel chants a blessing over the wine and the father puts a few drops onto the baby's lips. The baby is officially given his name, then there may be poems and songs, before ending with a big party.



Torah Time..

'You shall circumcise the flesh of your foreskin and that shall be the sign of the covenant between you and me.'

'Every male shall be circumcised at the age of 8 days.'

'Any male who is uncircumcised has broken my covenant.'

Key words

B'rit Milah - the religious ceremony when a boy is circumcised when he is 8 days old

Mohel - the specially trained man who performs the circumcision

Brisk - actually removing the foreskin

Covenant - a two-way agreement

BAR MITZVAH



Most religions have a ceremony which initiates their young boys into their religion. In Judaism this is called a Bar Mitzvah. As you learnt before the mitzvah are the rules Jews live by, so it literally translates to 'Son of the Commandments.' Jewish boys will have this at the age of 13. Afterwards they will be responsible for doing all their own acts of worship including prayers and reading the Torah. Before they must attend classes which teach them how to do this, and at the service they will have to read a section of the Torah in front of every one.

What about girls?

In Reformed Synagogues girls are allowed to have this rite of passage. They call it 'Bat Mitzvah' which means daughter of the commandments. Same as the boys, they learn and recite the Torah, and will have a party afterwards. They have it the year earlier than boys because it is thought that girls mature earlier. In Orthodox Synagogues which are more traditional girls are not allowed to do this because they believe that it is the man's job, and God made Adam and Eve to have different roles. Traditionally, in the Temple in Jerusalem (before it was destroyed) only men were allowed to become Priests and read from the Torah so women were never taught this.

Why is it important?

- It shows that they are now entering adulthood
- They are seen as responsible enough to play an active role in the religion.
- It is part of their identity and tradition
- It is a special day where they will receive presents and gifts of money
- After the service they will have a huge party!
- Although it doesn't mention a Bar Mitzvah in the Torah or Talmud, it is mentioned in the Mishnah



What happens in a Bar Mitzvah?

- The Rabbi will say prayers
- The family all recite a passage together
- The boy or girl read the specific passage (this is different for boys than for girls)
- They will write a speech thanking their family for their love and support
- Their friends and family all throw sweets at them to show they want them to have a sweet life
- They wear the tallit for the first time
- Afterwards they will have a party

Key words

Bar Mitzvah - Son of the Commandment and is the ceremony when a Jewish boy becomes a man
Bat Mitzvah - See above - for girls

Commandments - rules or Mitzvot
Initiation - the process of being accepted into a religion as an adult
Tallit - prayer shawl

Marriage



According to Jewish law marriage is something that has TWO parts. The first is when they make the promise to get married which is called betrothal. The second is the actual marriage ceremony. For Jews the marriage day is one of the happiest days of their life, and marks the start to a new phase when their previous sins are forgiven. Jews believe that you should be married before you have children and that it is a life-long union that cannot be broken. According to Jewish law the couple are officially married in the eyes of God once the groom gives the bride the ring which is a symbol of his eternal love. This should be simple with no stones or jewels to show their marriage will be one of simple beauty.

Key parts of the marriage ceremony include:

- **Badeken** - The groom covers the bride's head and face with a veil which symbolises that he is interested in more than just her appearance. It can also show that from that point on her beauty is for his eyes only.
- The bride's family link arms and walk with her
- 2 cups of wine are used to symbolise joy and the Amidah prayer is said
- The wedding ceremony takes place under the **chuppah**, which is a sort of tent or canopy. It symbolises the home to be built and shared by the couple. It is open on all sides showing that all guests will be welcomed in.
- Under the **chuppah**, the **bride** circles her future husband seven times. Just as the world was built in seven days, the **bride** is symbolically building the walls of their new life together
- A glass is placed on the floor, and the **groom** shatters it with his foot. This is an expression of sadness at the destruction of the Temple in Jerusalem, and shows that there will be good and bad times ahead but they will face them together.



Inter-faith marriages

In modern society many people believe that your religion does not matter and that you can marry whoever you want. However, many people in the Jewish community may say that it is still better for Jews to marry other Jews. This is because they are expected to follow many complex rules that a non-Jew may not understand. Also they may want their children to be raised as Jews, and that as religion is very important to them there will automatically be too many differences between them if they do not have it in common. In Israel same sex marriages are also not legal because many Jews believe that God made Adam and Eve, so couples should be male and female.

Torah Time...

In Genesis it says 'A man leaves his father and mother, clings to his wife and they two become one flesh.'

Key words

Chatan - the groom (husband to be)
Kallah - the bride (wife to be)
Badeken - the veiling ceremony which is part of the marriage
Chuppah - an open canopy the bride and groom stand under
Inter-faith- people of two different religions
Ritual/Rite - a traditional action

Olam Ha Ba - THE AFTERLIFE

Although Jews do believe in the afterlife (called Olam Ha Ba) it is not something that they focus on.

Instead they believe that you should focus on this life and make sure you are following the commandments and setting a good example to others. The beliefs about the afterlife also changed over the many years that it took them to write the Torah. Jews do not have one agreed set of beliefs about the afterlife, so there is no set teaching about it. Originally there was just one place called **Sheol** where everyone went. However, now most Jews believe in 2 different places, **Gan Eden and Gehinnom**. Some Jews also believe that there is nothing until the Messiah comes, at which point the bodies of the dead may be raised back to life, starting with those buried in Jerusalem. This is called the **resurrection of the body**.

Gan Eden (or Ha Gan) – This translates to the Garden of Eden but does not refer to the place where Adam and Eve were. Instead it is seen as a place of paradise where good souls go to be rewarded after death. It is a place of perfect peace, like Jews may feel during the Sabbath. Only the very good go straight here. Others may end up here eventually but must go to Gehinnom or Sheol first.

Gehenna – (sometimes also referred to as Gahennom) this is a place where bad people go to be punished for their sins. It is seen as a terrible place, similar to the Christian idea of Hell. However, someone will not spend more than 12 months here, after which they ascend to Gan Eden. However, some say that the truly wicked will stay here for ever or simply stop existing after the 12 months instead of going to heaven.



Evidence for Olam Ha Ba

- In the Tenakh it says *'many of those who sleep in the dust of the earth will awake.'* This leads many Jews to think that instead of a heaven or hell they will be asleep until they are all resurrected, starting with those buried in Jerusalem.

- Also in the Amidah the second blessing says *'Your great mercies give life to the dead'* which means that God will be kind and give them some sort of afterlife, although this could be heaven/hell OR a resurrection

Other Views

Some Reform Jews do not believe in the resurrection but just in the afterlife.

Key words

Olam Ha Ba - the afterlife/what happens to your soul when your body dies

Sheol - the traditional Jewish place that your soul goes to when you die

Gan Eden - place of reward like heaven

Gehenna - place of punishment like hell

Resurrection - rising from the dead

Funerals

Jews have various ways of showing respect to their dead before the funeral even starts. The body is washed, wrapped in a plain linen cloth and then men are wrapped in a tallit which has the corner cut off to show it will no longer be used in this life. The body is then put in a plain casket and draped in a prayer shawl. Someone will stay with the coffin and say Psalms from the Torah. During the funeral prayers will be said and some of the Torah may be read. Mourners will make a rip or tear in their clothes to show the pain they are in and the funeral must be as soon as possible after the death. They will not be cremated as this is forbidden but will be buried, often with the Star of David on the gravestone. Flowers are not sent but instead small stones will be placed on the grave with the left hand. There is a special prayer which will be said. This does not mention death or the deceased's family as some may expect but instead talks about how wonderful and loving God is. This is because even the funeral must remain focused on God and not ones self.

Time of Mourning

Shiva – This is the most intense period of mourning that lasts 7 days during which they do not leave the house. During this time they will not wear perfume, jewellery of bright colours. They will avoid technology and sometimes even sit on low stools, wearing slippers to show how death interrupts life. Neighbours will bring food around and the Kaddish will be said 3 times a day.

Sheloshim – This lasts a month but some normal life will resume. The Kaddish will be said every day and things such as the cinema and parties must still be avoided. Men will not shave or cut their hair.

Shana – This is the final stage that lasts a year and although the Kaddish must still be said every day most other things are normal.



Torah Time..

Psalm 23 – *'The Lord is my Shepherd, I shall not want. Though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death I fear no evil.'*

Key words

Kaddish - prayer for the dead
Shiva - 7 days of intense mourning
Sheloshim - 30 days of mourning
Shana - final stage of mourning
Deceased - the person who died
Mourning - sadness caused by losing someone you loved.