

N5

RMPS

**World Religion
Judaism**



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National 4/5 Outcomes: World Religions: Judaism

1 1.1	Describing the meaning of a source related to a world religion today, in straightforward terms
1 1.2	Describing one key belief and one key practice related to the source, in straightforward terms
1 1.3	Describing how the source informs the beliefs and practice, in straightforward.
1 1.4	Providing a straightforward comment on the significance of a religious belief, practice, and source to people's lives today.

All learners are required to study the following areas to pass the World Religion: Judaism unit:

MANDATORY CONTENT	
BELIEFS	PRACTICES
Nature of G-d Nature of human beings A Chosen People – the Covenant The Messiah Judgement	Living according to the Torah Shabbat Yom Kippur Worship

You are expected to read over your notes regularly during the course and in preparation for unit assessments, class essays and the final exam.

You should build up your knowledge and understanding of each of the key concepts outlined above as well as explaining and making connections to how such concepts impact on the lives of Jews today.

Key skills:

- Knowledge
- Understanding
- Critical analysis
- Evaluation
- Presenting reasoned and well-structured views

JEWISH BELIEFS

Nature of G-d

The best place to start is with G-d – the fundamental belief of Jews is in one G-d = **creator, father, judge, king, teacher**. G-d has no body. Although many places in scripture and Talmud speak of various parts of G-d's body (the Hand of G-d, G-d's wings, etc.) or speak of G-d in anthropomorphic terms (G-d walking in the garden of Eden, etc.), Judaism firmly maintains that G-d has no body. Any reference to G-d's body is simply a figure of speech, a means of making G-d's actions more comprehensible to beings living in a material world.

Jews are forbidden to represent G-d in a physical form that is considered idolatry. The sin of the Golden Calf incident was not that the people chose another deity, but that they tried to represent G-d in a physical form. They believe seven things about G-d:

G-d is One – One of the primary expressions of Jewish faith, recited twice daily in prayer, is the Shema. "*Hear, Israel: The Lord is our G-d, The Lord is one.*" There is only one G-d. No other being participated in the work of creation. He is a single, whole, complete indivisible entity. G-d cannot be divided into parts or described by attributes. Any attempt to ascribe attributes to G-d is merely man's imperfect attempt to understand the infinite.

G-d is Creator - Everything in the universe was created by G-d and only by G-d. Judaism completely rejects the dualistic notion that evil was created by Satan or some other deity.

All comes from G-d. As Isaiah said, "*I am the Lord, and there is none else. I form the light and create darkness, I make peace and create evil. I am the Lord, that does all these things.*" (Is. 45:6-7).

G-d is Eternal – G-d transcends time. G-d has no beginning and no end. G-d will always be there to fulfill his promises

G-d is our Father and our King (Avinu Malkeinu) - Judaism maintains that we are all G-d's children. A well-known piece of Jewish liturgy repeatedly describes G-d as "*Avinu Malkeinu*," our Father, our King. It is said that one of G-d's greatest gifts to humanity is the knowledge that we are His children and created in his image.

Omniscient (all knowing) – G-d knows all things, past, present and future. G-d knows our thoughts.

Omnipotent (all powerful) – G-d can do anything. It is said that the only thing that is beyond G-d's power is the fear of G-d; that is, Man has free will, and G-d cannot compel us to do G-d's will. This belief in G-d's omnipotence has been tested during the many persecutions of Jews, but they have always maintained that G-d has a reason for allowing these things, even if in their limited perception and understanding cannot see the reason.

Omnipresent – (exists everywhere at the same time)

G-d is in all places at all times. He fills the universe and exceeds its scope. He is always near to be called upon in need, and He sees all. Closely tied in with this idea is the fact that G-d is universal. He is not just the G-d of the Jews; He is the G-d of all nations.

Because of G-d's status Jews will **very rarely utter his name**. In prayer they will call him '**Adonai**' which means 'my lord' and when speaking about G-d they will refer to him as '**Ha-Shem**' which translates as 'the

name'. Using either of these terms is a mark of **respect** for G-d. Using his name in public is classed as **blasphemy** and greatly frowned upon. Jews are also very careful about **idolatry** (worshipping images), as this too would be classed as blasphemous.

Jews believe that G-d is very different from humans but they stress the importance of humans as G-d created them to reflect some part of His nature, an attribute that made them different from all other animals – **moral judgment, ability to reason and free will.**

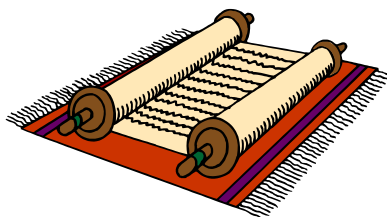
Task

Answer the following, in sentences, in your jotter.

1. Write down the seven things that describe the nature of G-d into your jotter.
2. Think of a way to remember these descriptions.
3. Why would a Jew not mention G-d's name?
4. What do Jews use instead of G-d?
5. Can you think of any examples of common blasphemy in our society?
6. What is your view on this?
7. Explain how G-d different/similar to humans, according to Jewish belief?

Creation

The Jewish creation story is the same as the Christian one. It can be found in both the Torah (Jewish scriptures) and in the Old Testament (the first half of the Bible).



Source Genesis 1 The Story of Creation

¹ In the beginning, when G-d created the universe² the earth was formless and desolate. The raging ocean that covered everything was engulfed in total darkness, and the Spirit of G-d was moving over the water.³ Then G-d commanded, Let there be light and light appeared.⁴ G-d was pleased with what he saw. Then he separated the light from the darkness,⁵ and he named the light Day and the darkness Night. Evening passed and morning came that was the **first day**.

⁶Then G-d commanded, Let there be a dome to divide the water and to keep it in two separate places and it was done. ⁷So G-d made a dome, and it separated the water under it from the water above it.⁸ He named the dome Sky. Evening passed and morning came that was the **second day**.



⁹ Then G-d commanded, Let the water below the sky come together in one place, so that the land will appear and it was done.¹⁰ He named the land Earth, and the water which had come together he named Sea. And G-d was pleased with what he saw.¹¹ Then he commanded, Let the earth produce all kinds of plants, those that bear grain and those that bear fruit and it was done.¹² So the earth produced all kinds of plants, and G-d was **pleased** with what He saw. ¹³ Evening passed and morning came that was the **third day**.

¹⁴ Then G-d commanded, Let lights appear in the sky to separate day from night and to show the time when days, years, and religious festivals begin; ¹⁵ they will shine in the sky to give light to the earth and it was done.¹⁶ So G-d made the two larger lights, the sun to rule over the day and the moon to rule over the night; he also made the stars.¹⁷ He placed the lights in the sky to shine on the earth,¹⁸ to rule over the day and the night, and to separate light from darkness. And G-d was pleased with what He saw.¹⁹ Evening passed and morning came that was the **fourth day**.

²⁰ Then G-d commanded, Let the water be filled with many kinds of living beings, and let the air be filled with birds.²¹ So G-d created the great sea monsters, all kinds of creatures that live in the water, and all kinds of birds. And G-d was pleased with what he saw.²² He blessed them all and told the creatures that live in the water to **reproduce** and to fill the sea, and he told the birds to increase in number.²³ Evening passed and morning came that was the **fifth day**.

²⁴ Then G-d commanded, Let the earth produce all kinds of animal life: domestic and wild, large and small and it was done.²⁵ So G-d made them all, and he was pleased with what he saw. ²⁶ Then G-d said, **and now we will make human beings; they will be like us and resemble us**. They will have power over the fish, the birds, and all animals, domestic and wild, large and small. ²⁷ So G-d created human beings, making them to be **like himself**. He created them male and female,²⁸ blessed them, and said, **Have many children**, so that your descendants will live all over the earth and bring it under their control. I am putting you in charge of the fish, the birds, and all the wild animals.²⁹ I have provided all kinds of grain and all kinds of fruit for you to eat;³⁰ but for all the wild animals and for all the birds I have provided grass and leafy plants for food and it was done.³¹ G-d looked at everything he had made, and he was **very pleased**. Evening passed and morning came that was the **sixth day**.



Source Genesis 2

¹ And so the whole universe was completed.² By the **seventh day** G-d finished what he had been doing and **stopped working**.³ He blessed the seventh day and set it apart as a special day, because by that day he had completed his creation and stopped working.⁴ And that is how the universe was created.

The Man and Woman in Eden

When the LORD G-d made the earth and the heavens,⁵ neither wild plants nor grains were growing on the earth. For the LORD G-d had not yet sent rain to water the earth, and there were no people to cultivate the soil.⁶ Instead, springs came up from the ground and watered all the land.⁷ Then the LORD **G-d formed the man from the dust of the ground**. He breathed the **breath of life into the man's nostrils**, and the man became a living person.

⁸ Then the LORD G-d planted a garden in Eden in the east, and there he placed the man he had made.⁹ The LORD G-d made all sorts of trees grow up from the ground—trees that were beautiful and that produced delicious fruit. In the middle of the garden he placed the tree of life and the **tree of the knowledge of good and evil**.

¹⁰ A river flowed from the land of Eden, watering the garden and then dividing into four branches.¹¹ The first branch, called the Pishon, flowed around the entire land of Havilah, where gold is found.¹² The gold of that land is exceptionally pure; aromatic resin and onyx stone are also found there.¹³ The second branch, called the Gihon, flowed around the entire land of Cush.¹⁴ The third branch, called the Tigris, flowed east of the land of Asshur. The fourth branch is called the Euphrates.



¹⁵ The LORD G-d placed the man in **the Garden of Eden to tend and watch over it**.

¹⁶ But the LORD G-d warned him, "You may freely eat the fruit of every tree in the garden—¹⁷ except the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. If you eat its fruit, you are sure to die."

¹⁸ Then the LORD G-d said, "It is not good for the man to be alone. **I will make a helper who is just right for him**."¹⁹ So the LORD G-d formed from the ground all the wild animals and all the birds of the sky. He brought them to the man to see what

he would call them, and the man chose a name for each one.²⁰ He gave names to all the livestock, all the birds of the sky, and all the wild animals. But still there was no helper just right for him.

²¹ So the LORD G-d caused the **man to fall into a deep sleep**. While the man slept, the LORD **G-d took out one of the man's ribs** and closed up the opening.²² Then the LORD G-d made a woman from the rib, and he brought her to the man.

²³ "At last!" the man exclaimed. "*This one is bone from my bone, and flesh from my flesh! She will be called 'woman,' because she was taken from 'man.'*"

²⁴ This explains why a man leaves his father and mother and is joined to his wife, and the two are united into one.

²⁵ Now the man and his wife were both naked, but they felt no shame.

Task

Answer the following questions based on the source above.

1. Summarise Genesis 1 and then Genesis 2 in your own words.
2. What do you think the source mean for Jews today?
3. Explain one key belief related to the sources.

Nature of Human Beings

Humans were created in the "image" of G-d. The "image" of G-d means the ability to enquire and reason. Humans can be both good and evil. Freewill is the ability to choose what you want to do and how you want to behave. What does it mean to be created in G-d's image? Clearly, it does not mean that we are created in the physical image of G-d, because Judaism maintains that G-d has no physical appearance. Instead, Judaism suggests that we are in G-d's image because of our nature. Humans are unique because we have the ability to enquire and reason. Our intellect means that we are able to perceive things without the use of our physical senses, an ability that makes us like G-d, who perceives without having physical senses.

A large part of Judaism is based on **repentance** and **forgiveness**. This all began with what the Jews call **original sin** which involved a guy called Adam and a girl called Eve. Jews will repent often, where they will ask G-d and their fellow man to forgive them their mistakes.

Repentance = being sorry for all the bad things we have done and looking for forgiveness.

Forgiveness = asking someone to pardon you for a bad thing or things that you have done to them.

If someone has done wrong a Jew would say that it is important that they should not have to bear the burden of guilt for evermore. Repentance is being sorry for the bad things you have done and making amends and, where possible, is a way to wipe the slate clean and start again.

Humans are made in the image of G-d; able to love and reason between right and wrong and understand the consequences that holds.

If we do wrong then we are punished for this.

Task

Answer these questions fully:

- 1.What is meant by 'humans created in the image of G-d'?
- 2.What is Original Sin?
- 3.Explain what Jews mean by 'repentance'?
- 4.Jews think it is important to repent often. Why do you think this is? Explain your answer.
- 5.Do you think the concept of repentance is good or bad? Give a reason for your answer.

Yetzer Tov & Yetzer Harah

Judaism believes that everyone has two opposing inclinations, the **inclination to do good** –the **Yetzer Tov** and the **inclination to do wrong** – the **Yetzer Harah**. These inclinations are **not bad or good in themselves** but they are the **potential to do good or evil**. They are our **natural urges or impulses**, which we would not be human beings without.

 **Yetzer Tov - The inclination to do right, our moral conscience**

 **Yetzer Harah - The inclination to do wrong, our instinct for survival**



The **Yetzer Tov** is our moral conscience. It can be **strengthened by education and by constantly living in a moral way**. Some Jewish people don't believe the Yetzer Tov is developed until a young person reaches 13, when they become responsible for following the commandments. The more we pay attention to it, the easier it becomes. On the other hand, it can wither away if we ignore it we don't learn how we should behave and if all our actions are governed by self-interest alone. The **Yetzer Harah** is our **instinct for survival**, the need for food, ambition, the wish to succeed, the wish to love, be loved and procreate. When controlled, these instincts are acceptable but uncontrolled they can be evil.



Yetzer Harah is not necessarily a bad thing – remember good and evil are created by G-d and all things created by G-d are good. The Talmud notes that without Yetzer Harah men would not build a house, marry a wife, have children or work. But – Yetzer Harah can lead to wrongdoing when it is not controlled by the Yetzer Tov.

We need food to survive, but if we are greedy and take too much then it's not good for our physical health or our moral health. We are taking more than our fair share. Similarly, the wish to succeed is not bad in itself. Without it, no one would invent things, create beautiful objects, buy a house or wish to improve theirs and other peoples' standards of living. **HOWEVER** if a person cheats or lies in order to succeed then that is bad.

Similarly, without the desire to have sex we would become extinct, so that is ok in itself.

HOWEVER if our sexual desire is unchecked and we become sexual predators, regardless of the feelings of the other party then that is bad.

In other words, we need that ambition in order to get on in the world – but if that ambition is unchecked by our Yetzer Tov (moral conscience) and is allowed to act regardless of other people, it becomes evil, which is when it is called the Yetzer Harah (evil inclination).

Judaism believes that people have free will and are responsible for their choices and actions therefore they believe that man needs both Yetzer Harah and Yetzer Tov to survive.

Task

Complete the following in your jotters:

1. Make a fact-file that helps you understand the meaning of Yetzer Harah and Yetzer Tov.
2. Give your own examples of balanced and imbalanced Yetzer Tov and Harah.



Source Genesis 37:12-36 – Joseph is sold by his Brothers

¹² Soon after this, Joseph's brothers went to pasture their father's flocks at Shechem. ¹³ When they had been gone for some time, Jacob said to Joseph, "Your brothers are pasturing the sheep at Shechem. Get ready, and I will send you to them." "I'm ready to go," Joseph replied. ¹⁴ "Go and see how your brothers and the flocks are getting along," Jacob said. "Then come back and bring me a report." So Jacob sent him on his way, and Joseph traveled to Shechem from their home in the valley of Hebron. ¹⁵ When he arrived there, a man from the area noticed him wandering around the countryside. "What are you looking for?" he asked. ¹⁶ "I'm looking for my brothers," Joseph replied. "Do you know where they are pasturing their sheep?" ¹⁷ "Yes," the man told him. "They have moved on from here, but I heard them say, 'Let's go on to Dothan.'" So Joseph followed his brothers to Dothan and found them there.

Joseph Sold into Slavery

¹⁸ When Joseph's brothers saw him coming, they recognized him in the distance. As he approached, they made plans to kill him. ¹⁹ "Here comes the dreamer!" they said. ²⁰ "Come on, let's kill him and throw him into one of these cisterns. We can tell our father, 'A wild animal has eaten him.' Then we'll see what becomes of his dreams!" ²¹ But when Reuben heard of their scheme, he came to Joseph's rescue. "Let's not kill him," he said. ²² "Why should we shed any blood? Let's just throw him into this empty cistern here in the wilderness. Then he'll die without our laying a hand on him." Reuben was secretly planning to rescue Joseph and return him to his father.

²³ So when Joseph arrived, his brothers ripped off the beautiful robe he was wearing. ²⁴ Then they grabbed him and threw him into the cistern. Now the cistern was empty; there was no water in it. ²⁵ Then, just as they were sitting down to eat, they looked up and saw a caravan of camels in the distance coming toward them. It was a group of Ishmaelite traders taking a load of gum, balm, and aromatic resin from Gilead down to Egypt. ²⁶ Judah said to his brothers, "What will we gain by killing our brother? We'd have to cover up the crime." ²⁷ Instead of hurting him, let's sell him to those Ishmaelite traders. After all, he is our brother—our own flesh and blood!" And his brothers agreed. ²⁸ So when the Ishmaelites, who were Midianite traders, came by, Joseph's brothers pulled him out of the cistern and sold him to them for twenty pieces of silver. And the traders took him to Egypt. ²⁹ Sometime later, Reuben returned to get Joseph out of the cistern. When he discovered that Joseph was missing, he tore his clothes in grief. ³⁰ Then he went back to his brothers and lamented, "The boy is gone! What will I do now?"

³¹ Then the brothers killed a young goat and dipped Joseph's robe in its blood. ³² They sent the beautiful robe to their father with this message: "Look at what we found. Doesn't this robe belong to your son?"

³³ Their father recognized it immediately. "Yes," he said, "it is my son's robe. A wild animal must have eaten him. Joseph has clearly been torn to pieces!" ³⁴ Then Jacob tore his clothes and dressed himself in burlap. He mourned deeply for his son for a long time. ³⁵ His family all tried to comfort him, but he refused to be comforted. "I will go to my grave mourning for my son," he would say, and then he would weep.

Source Genesis 42 Joseph's Brothers Go to Egypt

When Jacob heard that grain was available in Egypt, he said to his sons, "Why are you standing around looking at one another? ² I have heard there is grain in Egypt. Go down there, and buy enough grain to keep us alive. Otherwise we'll die." ³ So Joseph's ten older brothers went down to Egypt to buy grain. ⁴ But Jacob wouldn't let Joseph's younger brother, Benjamin, go with them, for fear some harm might come to him. ⁵ So Jacob's sons arrived in Egypt along with others to buy food, for the famine was in Canaan as well. ⁶ Since Joseph was governor of all Egypt and in charge of selling grain to all the people, it was to him that his brothers came. When they arrived, they bowed before him with their faces to the ground. ⁷ Joseph recognized his brothers instantly, but he pretended to be a stranger and spoke harshly to them. "Where are you from?" he demanded. "From the land of Canaan," they replied. "We have come to buy food." ⁸ Although Joseph recognized his brothers, they didn't recognize him. ⁹ And he remembered the dreams he'd had about them many years before. He said to them, "You are spies! You have come to see how vulnerable our land has become."

¹⁰ "No, my lord!" they exclaimed. "Your servants have simply come to buy food. ¹¹ We are all brothers—members of the same family. We are honest men, sir! We are not spies!" ¹² "Yes, you are!" Joseph insisted. "You have come to see how vulnerable our land has become." ¹³ "Sir," they said, "there are actually twelve of us. We, your servants, are all brothers, sons of a man living in the land of Canaan. Our youngest brother is back there with our father right now, and one of our brothers is no longer with us." ¹⁴ But Joseph insisted, "As I said, you are spies! ¹⁵ This is how I will test your story. I swear by the life of Pharaoh that you will never leave Egypt unless your youngest brother comes here! ¹⁶ One of you must go and get your brother. I'll keep the rest of you here in prison. Then we'll find out whether or not your story is true. By the life of Pharaoh, if it turns out that you don't have a younger brother, then I'll know you are spies."

¹⁷ So Joseph put them all in prison for three days. ¹⁸ On the third day Joseph said to them, "I am a G-d-fearing man. If you do as I say, you will live. ¹⁹ If you really are honest men, choose one of your brothers to remain in prison. The rest of you may go home with grain for your starving families. ²⁰ But you must bring your youngest brother back to me. This will prove that you are telling the truth, and you will not die." To this they agreed. ²¹ Speaking among themselves, they said, "Clearly we are being punished because of what we did to Joseph long ago. We saw his anguish when he pleaded for his life, but we wouldn't listen. That's

why we're in this trouble." ²² "Didn't I tell you not to sin against the boy?" Reuben asked. "But you wouldn't listen. And now we have to answer for his blood!" ²³ Of course, they didn't know that Joseph understood them, for he had been speaking to them through an interpreter. ²⁴ Now he turned away from them and began to weep. When he regained his composure, he spoke to them again. Then he chose Simeon from among them and had him tied up right before their eyes. ²⁵ Joseph then ordered his servants to fill the men's sacks with grain, but he also gave secret instructions to return each brother's payment at the top of his sack. He also gave them supplies for their journey home. ²⁶ So the brothers loaded their donkeys with the grain and headed for home. ²⁷ But when they stopped for the night and one of them opened his sack to get grain for his donkey, he found his money in the top of his sack. ²⁸ "Look!" he exclaimed to his brothers. "My money has been returned; it's here in my sack!" Then their hearts sank. Trembling, they said to each other, "What has G-d done to us?" ²⁹ When the brothers came to their father, Jacob, in the land of Canaan, they told him everything that had happened to them. ³⁰ "The man who is governor of the land spoke very harshly to us," they told him. "He accused us of being spies scouting the land. ³¹ But we said, 'We are honest men, not spies. ³² We are twelve brothers, sons of one father. One brother is no longer with us, and the youngest is at home with our father in the land of Canaan.' ³³ "Then the man who is governor of the land told us, 'This is how I will find out if you are honest men. Leave one of your brothers here with me, and take grain for your starving families and go on home. ³⁴ But you must bring your youngest brother back to me. Then I will know you are honest men and not spies. Then I will give you back your brother, and you may trade freely in the land.'" ³⁵ As they emptied out their sacks, there in each man's sack was the bag of money he had paid for the grain! The brothers and their father were terrified when they saw the bags of money. ³⁶ Jacob exclaimed, "You are robbing me of my children! Joseph is gone! Simeon is gone! And now you want to take Benjamin, too. Everything is going against me!" ³⁷ Then Reuben said to his father, "You may kill my two sons if I don't bring Benjamin back to you. I'll be responsible for him, and I promise to bring him back." ³⁸ But Jacob replied, "My son will not go down with you. His brother Joseph is dead, and he is all I have left. If anything should happen to him on your journey, you would send this grieving, white-haired man to his grave."

Task

Complete the following in your jotters:

1. Read the story about Joseph and his brothers (Genesis 17: 19-33) above.
2. Explain the actions of the 12 brothers by referring to their Yetzer Harah and Yetzer Tov
3. Read Genesis 42: 7-20.
4. Explain the actions of Joseph when he meets up with his brothers again.

Source Genesis 3 The Man and Woman Sin

The **serpent** was the shrewdest of all the wild animals the LORD G-d had made. One day he asked the woman, “Did G-d really say you must not eat the fruit from any of the trees in the garden?”

² “Of course we may eat fruit from the trees in the garden,” the woman replied. ³ “It’s only the fruit from the tree in the middle of the garden that we are not allowed to eat. G-d said, ‘You must not eat it or even touch it; if you do, you will die.’”

⁴ “You won’t die!” the serpent replied to the woman. ⁵ “G-d knows that your eyes will be opened as soon as you eat it, and you will be like G-d, knowing both good and evil.”

⁶ The woman was convinced. She saw that the tree was beautiful and its fruit looked delicious, and she wanted the wisdom it would give her. So **she took some of the fruit** and ate it. Then she gave some to her husband, who was with her, and he ate it, too. ⁷ At that moment **their eyes were opened**, and they suddenly felt shame at their nakedness. So they sewed fig leaves together to cover themselves.

⁸ When the cool evening breezes were blowing, the man and his wife heard the LORD G-d walking about in the garden. So they hid from the LORD G-d among the trees. ⁹ Then the LORD G-d called to the man, “Where are you?”

¹⁰ He replied, “I heard you walking in the garden, so I hid. I was afraid because I was naked.”

¹¹ “Who told you that you were naked?” the LORD G-d asked. “Have you eaten from the tree whose fruit I commanded you not to eat?”

¹² The man replied, “It was the woman you gave me who gave me the fruit, and I ate it.”

¹³ Then the LORD G-d asked the woman, “What have you done?”

“The serpent deceived me,” she replied. “That’s why I ate it.”

¹⁴ Then the LORD G-d said to the serpent, “*Because you have done this, you are cursed more than all animals, domestic and wild. You will crawl on your belly, groveling in the dust as long as you live.*

¹⁵ *And I will cause hostility between you and the woman, and between your offspring and her offspring. He will strike your head, and you will strike his heel.*”

¹⁶ Then He said to the woman, “*I will sharpen the pain of your pregnancy, and in pain you will give birth. And you will desire to control your husband, but he will rule over you.*” ¹⁷ And to the man he said, “*Since you listened to your wife and ate from the tree whose fruit I commanded you not to eat, the ground is cursed because of you. All your life you will struggle to scratch a living from it. ¹⁸ It will grow thorns and thistles for you, though you will eat of its grains. ¹⁹ By the sweat of your brow will you have food to eat until you return to the ground from which you were made. For you were made from dust, and to dust you will return.*”



Paradise Lost: G-d’s Judgment

²⁰ Then the man—Adam—named his wife Eve, because she would be the mother of all who live. ²¹ And the LORD G-d made clothing from animal skins for Adam and his wife.

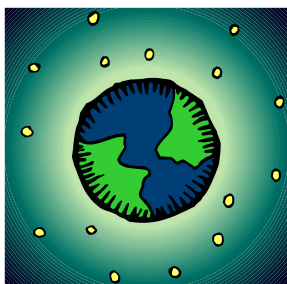
²² Then the LORD G-d said, “Look, the human beings have become like us, knowing both good and evil. What if they reach out, take fruit from the tree of life, and eat it? Then they will **Source Genesis 3: continued** live forever!” ²³ So the LORD G-d banished them from the Garden of Eden, and he sent Adam out to

cultivate the ground from which he had been made. ²⁴ After sending them out, the LORD G-d stationed mighty cherubim to the east of the Garden of Eden. And he placed a flaming sword that flashed back and forth to guard the way to the tree of life.

Task

Answer the following, in sentences, in your jotter.

1. Why do you think humans were created last?
2. What do you think is meant by 'created in the image of G-d'?
3. What did Adam and Eve do wrong?
4. How did G-d know they had done wrong?
5. What were the punishments?
6. What did this mean for humankind?
7. Create a story board to display the beginnings and fall of man.



G-d created Adam and Eve and granted them dominion over the world – they were different from the rest of G-d's creations; they had **free will**. The Torah said that G-d created a garden in the east especially for Adam and Eve – it was a beautiful and harmonious garden. Right in the midst of the garden was a tree; the **tree of knowledge** of good and evil...

Task

Answer the following, in sentences, in your jotter.

1. What do you think is meant by freewill?
2. Give examples of free will.
3. In what ways are humans 'made in the image of G-d'?
4. What do you think is meant by the human condition?
5. What responsibilities might come with being made in the image of G-d?

A large part of Judaism is based on **repentance** and **forgiveness**. This all began with what the Jews call **original sin** which involved a guy called Adam and a girl called Eve. Jews will repent often, where they will ask G-d and their fellow man to forgive them their mistakes.

Repentance = being sorry for all the bad things we have done and looking for forgiveness.

Forgiveness = asking someone to pardon you for a bad thing or things that you have done to them.

If someone has done wrong a Jew would say that it is important that they should not have to bear the burden of guilt for evermore. Repentance is being sorry for the bad things you have done and making amends and, where possible, is a way to wipe the slate clean and start again.

Task

Answer these questions fully

1. Take a note in your jotter about what repentance is.
2. Jews think it is important to repent often. Why do you think this is?
3. Do you think the concept of repentance is good or bad?

There are many examples of the consequences of evil actions in the Torah. The first of these, as you already know, was the result of eating of the tree of knowledge, of good and evil, for which Adam and Eve were thrown out of the Garden of Eden.

Q. Can all suffering be the result of evil actions?

Jewish explanation of the problem of evil and suffering

As you already know, Jews believe that evil actions result in consequences or punishments. However, there are many occasions when we see apparently innocent people suffering as a result of natural disasters such as floods, earthquakes, drought and famine or accidents due to crashes and fires as well as terrorist attacks and war. Some may wonder how this can happen if there is a fair and just G-d?

There are 3 ways a Jew may justify the suffering of innocent people:

- ✚ People will be **rewarded in the world to come** (Olam ha bah). This world is just a stepping stone to another, better place where the righteous finally get their true reward, a reward denied to the wicked.
- ✚ **Suffering is the punishment of the good for the sins of all in the world**, even the good people have committed in this world.
- ✚ **Humans are incapable of understanding the actions of an all-knowing, all-powerful G-d and should trust him.** In other words, people should accept that the problem of suffering is one for which we have no complete answer.

Task

Complete the following, in your jotter.

1. Copy down the 3 explanations for suffering into your jotter
2. Why does there have to be an explanation for suffering?
3. Do you think these are reasonable explanations to give? Explain your answer.

HOWEVER!

If we did not have free will then it would appear that G-d would have had to create a race of “puppet-like” creatures that simply obey him without thought or question. Most people would argue that love could never be forced or controlled. Love appears to demand free choice. If G-d had created puppets instead of human beings then any possibility to freely love would seem to be impossible. The free-will defence says that if we are to have real opportunities for choice and the real potential to love, then we must also live in a world where pain is a real possibility.



A Chosen People – the Covenant

A Covenant - Judaism says that Adam, Moses, Abraham and David each entered into special relationship with G-d called a covenant. G-d's side of each of these covenants was to teach people how he expected them to live, and to bless them and look after them forever. The Jews' side of the covenant was to worship the one true G-d and obey G-d's commandments (mitzvot). The Torah tells how this covenant relationship was broken again and again, but that G-d always forgave when the people repented, and so the covenant relationship still continues.

ABRAHAM – The First Covenant

The covenant between G-d and the Jewish people is a thread running throughout the early parts of the Torah, and one of the vital pillars of Judaism. G-d asks Abraham to do certain things, in return for which he will take special care of them. The covenant between G-d and Jews is the basis for the idea of the Jews as the chosen people. The first covenant was between G-d and Abraham.

Judaism is a very old religion and began about 4000 years ago in a country called Babylon (it's now called Iraq). It is not a religion with one founder (person who started it) but it has many great leaders. The first great leader of Judaism was a man called Abraham.

Abraham lived in a city called Ur. He wanted for nothing; he had a great wife, many servants and much wealth. Abraham was not happy however. He looked around him at life in the city and was saddened – people drank a lot, gambled and gave human sacrifices to the many G-ds they worshipped. The more Abraham thought about this the worse he felt. He felt in his heart that there was only one true G-d, a G-d that would not be pleased with human sacrifice. This led Abraham to leave the city of Ur to go wandering in the wilderness.



As Abraham and his wife journeyed he felt closer and closer to G-d. This was a time when Abraham forged a special relationship with G-d, where he believed that he would become the father of a great nation who would also be close with G-d. These people would be known as Jews. As part of the Covenant between Abraham and G-d, Jewish men are circumcised as a symbol of this covenant: *“You shall be circumcised in the flesh of your foreskins, and it shall be a sign of the covenant between me and you.”* **Genesis 17**

G-d promised to make Abraham the father of a great people and said that Abraham and his descendants must obey G-d. In return G-d would guide them and protect them and give them the land of Israel. But it wasn't simply a matter of obeying rules – G-d didn't just want the Jews to follow a particular set of laws, but to live their lives in such a way as to show the world that G-d actually was the one and only all-powerful G-d, whom people should follow and worship.

ABRAHAM & ISSAC

G-d ordered Abraham to abandon his way of life and leave his home country to live in the land of Canaan. Abraham was 99 at the time, so this was a hard thing to ask. The LORD said:

“Leave your country, your people and your father's household and go to the land I will show you. I will make you into a great nation and I will bless you; I will make your name great, and you will be a blessing.”

Source Genesis 12:1-2

This promise that Abraham would become the father of a great nation seemed impossible, since Abraham was very old, and his wife Sarah (90) had never been able to have children.

But G-d did cause Sarah to become pregnant with Isaac. By doing this G-d showed that he was in control of even the processes of nature like having children. G-d also showed that in order to keep his promises to his chosen people he would intervene in the world and alter it.

Later, G-d tested Abraham's obedience by ordering him to kill his much-loved son Isaac as a sacrifice. Abraham didn't argue with G-d, he kept his side of the covenant and prepared to sacrifice Isaac. G-d stopped him from killing his son, but the story remains as a perfect example of the level of obedience that G-d expected.

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Task 10

Complete the following

1. The covenant agreement between G-d and Abraham affects the lives of Jews today because...
2. *On a page in your jotter, produce an acrostic diagram answering the question: What is a covenant?*

MOSES & THE EXODUS – The Second Covenant

Abraham was the first great leader of Judaism. The next great leader was alive about 3000 years ago in Egypt. He was born in a time of grave trouble for Jews...

For many years the Jews had been slaves in Egypt. The Egyptians were very cruel to the Jews; making them work long hours with little food or water and their living conditions were poor. The Pharaoh of Egypt at that time watched the Jews and grew scared that they would one day soon become more powerful than him. He felt the only solution was to order the death of all Jewish baby boys at birth (girls were not seen as a threat at this time). Around this time, in a simple and small house, a happy occasion was being celebrated, the birth of a healthy baby boy by the name of Moses. He was adored by his family and they could not bare the thought of him being murdered by the Pharaoh's army. His mother hatched a plan.

She placed baby Moses in a basket and brought him to the river. Her instincts told her this was his only chance- she pushed the basket out into the water and said a prayer for her son. Luckily he was found by the Pharaoh's daughter who fell in love with the child as soon as she saw him. She begged her father to bring him up as his own in the palace. Her father agreed. Moses had the perfect life and grew up wanting for nothing. But when he was a young man he became unhappy because he did not like the way the Jewish slaves were treated. One day Moses watched a slave driver and was enraged with the cruel way in which he treated the Jews. He killed the man. Moses was a good person and this was all too much for him so he fled Egypt.

He lived in the desert for many years after this event, herding goats and such like. That was until one day something very strange happened – Moses came across a bush that was on fire. It appeared to be strange to him as the flames were very different to that of a normal fire; they were blue and cold. Moses was

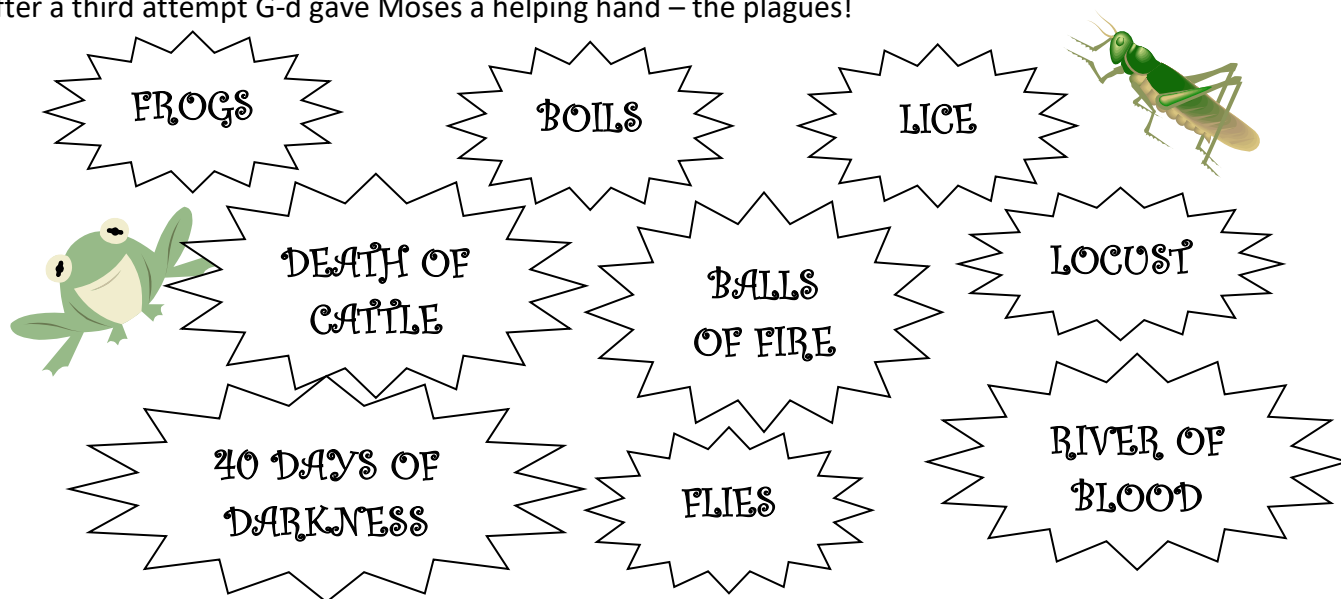
scared, especially when he heard a voice coming from the flames. The voice was that of G-d's. He told Moses that he must return and free the Jewish slaves. This frightened Moses and he thought it would be impossible – he was only one man against a whole army. G-d reassured Moses that when the time came he would have help.

Moses did as G-d said and returned to Egypt. He went straight to the Pharaoh who laughed out loud when he asked him to free the Jews. Moses left but was not undeterred and returned again.

“LET MY PEOPLE GO!!” Moses demanded.

“NO, NO, NO!!” Pharaoh replied.

After a third attempt G-d gave Moses a helping hand – the plagues!



These plagues came and the Egyptians suffered but still the Pharaoh would not let the Jews go. That was until the tenth plague; the death of the eldest son. G-d told Moses that all Jews should mark their doors with lambs' blood. That night the angel of death passed over Egypt and killed all of the eldest boys in each family. The Jewish houses were safe because they had marked their doors.

The Pharaoh was devastated by this plague, he had lost his own son. This was the final straw, the Pharaoh finally let the Jewish slaves go.

The Jews quickly gathered their belongings and fled Egypt. They set off on a journey to the Promise Land, that which had been spoken of in the time of Abraham. However, the pharaoh was renowned for being of changeable nature and had sent an army to re-capture the Jews. The Jews were terrified when they realised this and especially so when they reached the Sea of Reeds (Red Sea) with no means to cross.

They were trapped. Moses knew that G-d would help them and so he did by parting the Sea. *“Then Moses stretched out his hand over the sea, and the LORD drove the sea back by a strong east wind all night and made the sea dry land, and the waters were divided.”*

Exodus 14:21 All of the Jews managed to cross safely and when the last person had reached the other side the water came crashing down upon the approaching army. Finally, they were safe. This was not the end of their journey, they had still to get to the Promised Land.

MOSES ON MOUNT SINAI

Moses was known as the second great leader of Judaism, he is remembered for freeing the Jewish slaves from the Egyptian Pharaoh. Once the Jews were free Moses led them into the desert, which was the start of a forty-year journey to the Promise Land. During this time G-d spoke to Moses on Mount Sinai to give him and his people guidelines for living.

G-d again promised to stay with the Jews and never to abandon them, because they were his chosen people.

...if you will obey my voice and keep my covenant, you shall be my own possession among all peoples; for all the earth is mine, and you shall be to me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation...

G-d told the Jewish People, that for their part, they must dedicate themselves to serving G-d for ever, and to making the world a better and holier place by obeying G-d's laws.

The most famous of these commandments are the Ten Commandments. But there are actually 613 commandments covering every aspect of life including law, family, and personal hygiene and diet. Most scholars date the beginning of Judaism as an organised and structured religion to this time.

After some time travelling through the desert G-d called upon Moses to tell him to gather the Jews as he would be giving them guidelines for a righteous life. The day came that G-d was to speak, and there were dark clouds over Mount Sinai, thunder sounded over the land and lightening came down in great streaks. Moses climbed the mountain to hear G-d's words...

Source Exodus 20

Ten Commandments for the Covenant Community

Then G-d gave the people all these instructions: ² *"I am the LORD your G-d, who rescued you from the land of Egypt, the place of your slavery. ³ "You must not have any other G-d but me.*

⁴ *"You must not make for yourself an idol of any kind or an image of anything in the heavens or on the earth or in the sea. ⁵ You must not bow down to them or worship them, for I, the LORD your G-d, am a jealous G-d who will not tolerate your affection for any other G-ds. I lay the sins of the parents upon their children; the entire family is affected—even children in the third and fourth generations of those who reject me. ⁶ But I lavish unfailing love for a thousand generations on those who love me and obey my commands.*

⁷ *"You must not misuse the name of the LORD your G-d. The LORD will not let you go unpunished if you misuse his name. ⁸ "Remember to observe the Sabbath day by keeping it holy. ⁹ You have six days each week for your ordinary work, ¹⁰ but the seventh day is a Sabbath day of rest dedicated to the LORD your G-d. On that day no one in your household may do any work. This includes you, your sons and daughters, your male and female servants, your livestock, and any foreigners living among you. ¹¹ For in six days the LORD made the heavens, the earth, the sea, and everything in them; but on the seventh day he rested. That is why the LORD blessed the Sabbath day and set it apart as holy.*

¹² *"Honour your father and mother. Then you will live a long, full life in the land the LORD your G-d is giving you. ¹³ "You must not murder. ¹⁴ "You must not commit adultery. ¹⁵ "You must not steal. ¹⁶ "You must not testify falsely against your neighbour. ¹⁷ "You must not covet your neighbour's house. You must not covet your neighbour's wife, male or female servant, ox or donkey, or anything else that belongs to your neighbour."*

¹⁸ When the people heard the thunder and the loud blast of the ram's horn, and when they saw the flashes



of lightning and the smoke billowing from the mountain, they stood at a distance, trembling with fear. ¹⁹ And they said to Moses, "You speak to us, and we will listen. But don't let G-d speak directly to us, or we will die!" ²⁰ "Don't be afraid," Moses answered them, "for G-d has come in this way to test you, and so that your fear of him will keep you from sinning!" ²¹ As the people stood in the distance, Moses approached the dark cloud where G-d was.

When all the people saw the lightening and heard the thunder they were scared and thought that if they heard G-d speak they would die. But Moses comforted them, saying that G-d wanted them to fear him so that they would not sin.

G-d and Moses made an agreement that day, on the mountain – G-d would look after the Jews and lead them to a new land and in return they would have to keep G-d's Commandments and set a good example to all people. Moses was given two stone tablets with rules written on them, these are known as the Ten Commandments. A **COVENANT** had been made.

In the years after Moses and the Exodus the Jews have not been lucky in their history. Currently there is conflict in Israel and only last century there was the Holocaust where over 6 million Jews were killed just for being Jewish.

Task

Answer the following questions, in sentences.

1. In what ways is Abraham the metaphorical 'father' to the Jews.
2. The Jews may refer to themselves as the 'chosen ones'. Can you think why this might be?
3. Jews, also known as Hebrews or Israelites, can be seen as or referred to as a 'nation'. What is a nation and why would Jews be seen as one?
4. What is a covenant?
5. What two covenants are important to Jews?
6. Draw up two 'contracts' which show both sides of the agreements.
7. Look at the Ten Commandments. They were made 3000 years ago, are they still relevant in life today? Give reasons for your answers.



Pesach / Passover

Pesach or Passover is a Jewish festival of celebration and remembrance – to remember the time when Jews were slaves in Egypt as well as to think about those in the world who are persecuted and incarcerated. It begins on the 15th day of the Jewish month of Nisan and lasts for eight days. There are many traditions related to this special time:

THE SEDER MEAL

The Seder meal is seen to be the most important part of Passover. Seder means order and refers to the ritual that is involved. Everyone at the table is involved and has a part to play. Symbolic foods and wine are eaten and drank.

The Seder meal begins with the youngest of the family asking:

"Why is this night different from all other nights?"

Then a story is told of the Jews escape from slavery and the symbolic foods eaten at specific times. There are eight foods that appear at a Seder meal:



PREPARATIONS

The house is cleaned and all bread items are removed from the house, this includes wheat, barley, oats and rye. The food items are removed from the house and given to homeless shelters or kept at a neighbour's house or maybe even the garage. This is symbolic of the UNLEVENED bread the Jews escaped slavery with. When the bread items or LEVEN are removed drawers and cupboards are cleaned with a feather.

A game is sometimes played on the night before the Seder meal where bread is hidden around the house and children are to find it and sweep it up.

1. MAROR or BITTER HERBS

This would typically be horseradish to represent the bitterness of slavery



2. CHAROSET

Is a paste mix of nuts, fruit and wine that represents the building in Egypt at the time of slavery as well as the sweetness of freedom.



3. KARPAS or GREEN VEGETABLE

This is usually parsley which is dipped in salt water; the green vegetable represents the wilderness that the Jews roamed in after their escape



4. SALT WATER

This is to dip the green vegetable into and is representative of the tears of the slaves

5. Z'ROA or SHANKBONE

The shankbone (sheep leg) is roasted and represents the lamb's blood that protected the Jewish boys from the angel of death



6. BEITZAH or ROASTED EGG

The hard-boiled and roasted egg is symbolic of new life



7. THE FOUR CUPS

Four sips of wine (or grape juice) are drunk at specific times during the meal; the four sips represent the four promises from G-d or the four worlds to come or four special Jewish ladies



8. MATZOT or UNLEVENED BREAD

These are like crackers. 3 matzos are on the Seder table, they represent the unleavened bread the escaped Jews had to eat



THE SEDER MEAL

As mentioned before, Seder means order. And so the meal has a traditional path:

- blessings and the first cup of wine
- wash hands
- appetizer
- breaking of the middle matzah
- The telling of the story of passover
- invitation to the Seder
- The Four Questions from the haggadah
- Second Cup of Wine
- ritual washing of hands
- blessings over the matzo
- bitter herb
- charoset and matzot sandwich
- the meal
- eating of the *afikoman* (other pieces of matzot)
- Grace after Meals
- the Third Cup of Wine
- fourth cup of wine
- songs of praise
- nirtzah prayer to end the meal
- a special dinner is eaten



Task

Answer the following questions, in sentences, in your jotter.

1. What is the other name Passover is known by?
2. What language do you think this is?
3. What do Jews think about on the festival of Passover?
4. Why do Jews have to prepare for Passover?
5. What is leaven and unleavened bread?
6. What do Jews do with leaven during Passover?
7. Why do they do this?
8. What does Seder actually mean?
9. Who speaks first at the Seder meal?
10. What do they say?
11. What are the foods on the Seder plate symbolic of? (answer this for each).

Orthodox and Reform Judaism

Throughout this topic we must remember that **not all Jews are the same**. Each person and each family and tradition that they are from will be different. This means that the way they follow the religion will have differences. Depending on what these differences are they can be referred to as ORTHODOX, CONSERVATIVE or REFORM.

Orthodox

Orthodox, or observant is the term given to a Jew who strictly follows faith and is careful to follow all the Laws laid down for them in their religion.

Reform

Reform Judaism originated in Germany in the early 19th century. It has its own synagogues and prayer book. Reform and other non-orthodox movements are larger in size than Orthodox Judaism worldwide.



There are similarities between the 2, but there are many more differences

Similarities

- The principle of Shabbat as a holy day that is different from the rest
- The covenant with G-d
- The moral and spiritual demands
- The pursuit of justice
- The sanctity of life
- The coming of the Messianic Age

Differences

- Not following the laws of Shabbat that are considered stifling to the delight of the spirit of Shabbat
- Permitting the blowing of the shofar when Rosh Hashanah falls on Shabbat
- Observing the only the major fast days
- Not following the full 613 commandments
- Women can contribute to services
- Literal reading of Torah
- Understanding of Messianic Age

Originating in Germany in the early nineteenth century, Reform Judaism is currently the largest Progressive Jewish group in the UK. It has its own synagogues and prayer book, and Beth Din. Although recognised by Progressive authorities, the ordination of Reform rabbis is not recognised by Orthodox authorities. Reform and other non-Orthodox movements are larger in size than Orthodox Judaism worldwide. Reform Judaism's shared beliefs with traditional Orthodox Judaism include recognition that the Torah is the foundation for Jewish belief, that human beings are created in the image of G-d and that Shabbat is a day of rest that is different from the rest of the week. While it views the Torah as being inspired by G-d, it considers that it was written down by humans according to their understanding of G-d's will. In doing so, it views these man-made interpretations as being open to challenge and revision, and subject to being outdated in parts. Reform Judaism distinguishes between parts of Judaism that are unique and have eternal significance from those that are temporary and relative.

Orthodoxy regards the written and oral laws as having equal importance and still binding on Jews today. Reform Judaism does not accept the written and oral laws as binding. The Reform movement's vision of Judaism is one that appeals to contemporary Jews and may be perceived as more responsive to modern

needs than Orthodoxy. It neither views itself to be superior or inferior to Orthodoxy. It considers itself a valid expression and brand of Judaism today.

One principle of Reform Judaism is that equality of men and women includes the full rights of women to participate in all religious activities which include the synagogue services. Women are thus allowed to read from the Torah, to lead the prayers, to wear a kippah, tallit and tefillin, and to be included in a minyan. Reform synagogues do not have a balcony or division between men and women as in Orthodox synagogues, and men and women can sit together. The Bat Mitzvah ceremony takes the same form as a Bar Mitzvah. Women can become rabbis and serve as ministers to Reform congregations. These practices are seen in the context of the natural rights of women which were denied to previous generations and are not to be found in Orthodox synagogues.

Orthodox Judaism is the traditional variety which take the Scriptures (the Torah, written and oral) literally and rabbinic tradition very seriously. They are very strict of the observance of the Torah as interpreted in the Talmud and later Jewish scholars. They also keep such traditional beliefs as a literal Messiah, a literal restoration to the Promised Land, and a literal life after death.

The Reform movement began in Germany in the 19th century with Jewish intellectuals who felt the old beliefs were no longer as relevant. The reformers sought to reshape Judaism into a modern religion. Many of the doctrines which the orthodox took literally were spiritualized in Reform Judaism. They saw no need to expect to return to Israel – they believed that the Promised Land could be anywhere and everywhere on earth and would be brought about by the striving for the Messianic Age. Instead of viewing the Torah as the infallible word of G-d, they saw it as "the record of Israel's consecration to G-d." They had services in the local language was instead of insisting on Hebrew; and they shortened the services.

They declared that ritual considerations such as keeping kosher were no longer relevant in such a strict way. Modern Reform Judaism holds Sabbath services, uses at least some Hebrew, and encourages keeping the Jewish feasts as being important for Jewish continuity

Conservative Judaism may be said to be a moderate position between Orthodox and Reform Judaism. It seeks to conserve the traditional elements of Judaism, while allowing for modernization to a less radical extent than Reform Judaism.

Task

Complete the following, in your jotter.

1. What is meant by the term Orthodox Judaism?
2. What is meant by the term Reform Judaism?

Task

Match the sentences

Orthodox Jews believe that	the Torah tells them how G-d wants them to live
Orthodox Jews follow the mitzvah	reform synagogue
The Torah is followed closely by	Hebrew
Some Jews decided to adapt to	fit into the countries they live better
Orthodox Jews read the Torah in	a reform synagogue
A reform Jew will recite the Torah in	women and men are permitted to sit together
In a reform synagogue	the language of the country they live in
Women are allowed to read from the Torah in	orthodox Jews
Reform, Liberal and progressive Jews	do not follow all of the mitzvah
Music plays in a	closely

The Messiah

The word 'Messiah' means '**anointed**' in Hebrew. Belief in the eventual coming of the mashiach (messiah) is a basic and fundamental part of traditional Judaism. In the Shemoneh Esrei prayer, recited three times daily, Jews pray for all of the elements of the coming of the messiah. This prayer is at the center of any Jewish religious service. It is also known as the Amidah or the Tefilah. Traditional Judaism maintains that the messianic idea has always been a part of Judaism.

The term "mashiach" literally means "**the anointed one**," and refers to the ancient practice of anointing kings with oil when they took the throne. The messiah is the one who will be anointed as king in the End of Days. The word "mashiach" does not mean "saviour."

The notion of an innocent, divine or semi-divine being who will sacrifice himself to save us from the consequences of our own sins is a **purely Christian concept** that has **no basis in Jewish thought**.

The messiah will be a great political leader **descended from King David**:

"Behold, the days are coming," declares the LORD, "When I will raise up for David a righteous Branch; And He will reign as king and act wisely And do justice and righteousness in the land." **Jeremiah 23:5** The messiah is often referred to as "mashiach ben David" (mashiach, son of David). **Jews believe that he will know a lot about Jewish law, and observe the commandments:**

² *The Spirit of the Lord will rest on him— the Spirit of wisdom and of understanding, the Spirit of counsel and of might, the Spirit of the knowledge and fear of the Lord—* ³ *and he will delight in the fear of the Lord. He will not judge by what he sees with his eyes, or decide by what he hears with his ears;* ⁴ *but with*

righteousness he will judge the needy, with justice he will give decisions for the poor of the earth, He will strike the earth with the rod of his mouth; with the breath of his lips he will slay the wicked. ⁵ Righteousness will be his belt and faithfulness the sash around his waist. Isaiah 11:2-5

Jews believe that the messiah will be a charismatic leader, inspiring others to follow his example; he will be a great military leader, who will win battles for Israel; he will be a great judge, who makes righteous decisions: *'In those days and at that time I will cause a righteous **Branch of David to spring forth**; and He shall execute justice and righteousness on the earth.'* **Jeremiah 33:15**

But above all, he will be a **human being**, not a god, demi-god or any other supernatural being. When will the Messiah come? There are a wide variety of opinions on the subject of when the Jewish Messiah will come. Some of Judaism's greatest minds try to avoid predicting the time of the Messiah's coming, because errors in such predictions could cause people to lose faith in the Messianic idea or in Judaism itself. Although some scholars believed that G-d has set aside a specific date for the coming of the Messiah, most sources suggest that the conduct of mankind will determine the time of the Messiah's coming. In general, it is believed that the Messiah will come in a time when he is most needed (because the world is so sinful), or in a time when he is most deserved (because the world is so good).

For example, each of the following has been suggested as the time when the Messiah will come:

- if Israel repented a single day;
- if Israel observed a single Shabbat properly;
- if Israel observed two Shabbats in a row properly;
- in a generation that is totally innocent or totally guilty;
- in a generation that loses hope;
- in a generation where children are totally disrespectful towards their parents and elders;

What the Messiah will do?

Before the time of the Messiah, there shall be war and suffering: *"and you will come up against My people Israel like a cloud to cover the land. It shall come about in the last days that I will bring you against My land, so that the nations may know Me when I am sanctified through you before their eyes, O G-d."* **Ezekiel 38:16**

The Messiah will bring about the **political and spiritual redemption of the Jewish people by bringing them back to Israel and restoring Jerusalem**: ¹¹ *And it shall come to pass in that day, that the Lord shall set his hand again the second time to recover the remnant of his people, which shall be left, from Assyria, and from Egypt, and from Pathros, and from Cush, and from Elam, and from Shinar, and from Hamath, and from the islands of the sea.*

¹² *And he shall set up an ensign for the nations, and shall assemble the outcasts of Israel, and gather together the dispersed of Judah from the four corners of the earth.* **Isaiah 11:11-12**

He will **establish a government in Israel that will be the centre of all world government**, both for Jews and gentiles (non-Jews) (**Isaiah 2:2-4; 11:10; 42:1**).

He will rebuild the Temple and re-establish its worship (**Jeremiah 33:18**). He will restore the religious court system of Israel and establish Jewish law as the law of the land (**Jeremiah 33:15**).

It tends to be Orthodox Jews that believe the Messiah will be sent by G-d. This was predicted by a man named MAIMONIDES. Reform Jews have come round to the way of thinking that it is they themselves that have got to bring this time about.

ORTHODOX	REFORM
A messiah will be sent by G-d, a descendent of King David.	Jews need to bring the messianic age about by themselves.
The messiah will be a prophet, teacher and leader.	The Jewish people should be an example to everyone else.
Everyone will be Jewish.	Jews should try to bring others into Judaism.
The messiah will lead Jews back to the land of Israel, the Promise Land.	They will lead everyone to the Promise Land but the whole world can be this to some people.
The messiah will end all wars, famine and suffering. They will bring peace on earth.	Jewish people will bring peace on earth and work towards a time when there will be no wars, famine or suffering.
The messiah will rebuild the Temple, a very special holy building.	Jews will rebuild the Temple, a very special holy building.

The messianic age has not yet come but it is something the Jews look forward to and work towards. The Talmud warns Jews to try not to guess when the Messiah will come as such hopes will just lead to disappointment.

There have, however been many false hopes over the years when people have made false claim to the title, each one found to be untrue.

There are benefits and difficulties to both sects of Jews:

ORTHODOX

Benefits

- The world after the messiah comes sounds amazing, it is worth the wait.
- It is belief in the Messiah that can help through difficult times (people even declared it on the way to the gas chambers)
- G-d doesn't change, so the promises of G-d hold true, no matter how long ago they were made.
- The Messiah is central to the religion
- G-d can be trusted to decide when the Messiah is needed.

Difficulties

- It would be difficult trying not to predict when it would be or look forward to it.
- It would be hard if their life was tough and the Messianic age didn't come in their life, they might feel hard done by it.

REFORM

Benefits

- They do not just have to wait on when the Messiah will come, the Messianic age is in their hands to achieve.
- They can work towards it in their life, by living according to the Torah.

Difficulties

- It is a very difficult task to end famine and poverty as they affect so many people.
- Converting everyone to the religion would be very difficult as everyone has their own views.
- To bring peace to the world is a massive task, it would be difficult to know where to start even.
- It may be a disheartening task at times trying to bring about the Messianic era if there is no obvious progress.

Task

Answer the following questions, in sentences, in your jotter.

1. Explain the differences between Orthodox and Reform understanding of the messianic age.
2. Why do you think some people pretend to be the Messiah?
3. Which stance do you think is stronger, Orthodox or Reform? Give reasons for your answer and remember you can support both in your answer.

Judgement

“...In the seventh month, on the first of the month, there shall be a sabbath for you, a remembrance with shofar blasts, a holy convocation.” **Leviticus 16:24**

Forgiveness and Repentance,

Another way to show love to G-d and fellow human being is through repenting and making amends. We have touched on this previously. There is an expectation that Jews will show love and compassion for G-d and one another through seeking forgiveness for any action that may have hurt a person or people in some way. Jews should repent all year round but there is a special focus on repenting at a specific time of the year: over **Rosh Hashanah**, the **Days of Awe** and **Yom Kippur**.

Repentance means to seek forgiveness – in this case it means being **sorry for all the bad things you have done, making amends and asking forgiveness from G-d**. Jews believe that if a person has done something wrong it is important that they don't bear the burden of guilt forever more – repentance is a way to wipe the slate clean and start again.

The Hebrew term for repentance is **teshuvah** which means returning to G-d after having sinned. In Judaism, repentance only works for sins against G-d as sins against another human cannot be pardoned by repentance alone – its requires the individual to apologise to make peace with the person they wronged.

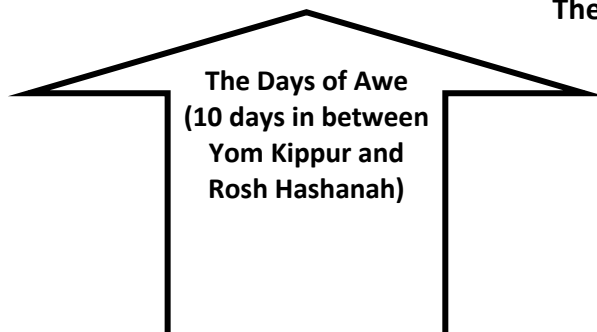
It is important for a Jew to repent frequently as they do not know on which day they will die. Jews can repent at any time of the year but the month of **Ellul** is the most important month to seek forgiveness for their sins. Traditionally this was the month Moses received the Ten Commandments from G-d. He later smashed the two tablets of stone in anger because the Israelites were worshipping idols. Forty days later, in the month of **Tishri**, he returned to the place he had received the commandments and G-d re-wrote them for the Israelites – this showed that G-d had forgiven them.

Ellul and Tishri are the months that are most strongly associated with repentance and forgiveness

There are 2 dates which are extremely important in the Jewish calendar that tie in with repentance:

Rosh Ha Shanah -
The Jewish New Year

Yom Kippur –
The Day of Atonement



Rosh Hashanah

Rosh Hashanah literally means '**Head of the Year**' and is a festival, which celebrates the first and second days of the **Jewish New Year**. This does not fall on the same date that we celebrate New Year as Jewish people have a different calendar.

This festival can be known by 4 different names:



- **Rosh Hashanah**
- **The Day of Judgement**
- **The Day of Remembrance**
- **The Day of the Sounding of the Shofar**

Rosh Hashanah is a time for Jews to **think about the past year** and how they should grow as a person. It is also a time to **celebrate the beginning of the world and G-d creating humans**.

Jews believe that on Rosh Hashanah, **all mankind is judged**. This judgment is based on our lives of the year before, where G-d makes the decision about what will happen to us in the coming year.

The 2 days of the Jewish New Year are celebrated in many ways

- **Shabbat customs are observed**
- **100 notes are blown on the Shofar**
- **Special prayers are said at the local synagogue**
- **Symbolic foods are eaten** (like eating apples dipped in honey and honey cake are symbolic of wishing for a sweet new year)



Rosh Hashanah is regarded as the **birthday of the world**, as it marks the anniversary of the day when G-d created man. It is a celebration that **lasts two days**. It is also known as **Yom Ha'din = the Day of Judgement**, as this is when G-d judges people for their deeds from the previous year, and **Yom Hazikaron = the day of remembrance**, as people remember their action and deeds of the previous year.

Like all Jewish festivals and Shabbat, prayers start with the evening service on the previous day. As people leave the synagogue, they greet each other with '**Shana Tova**' (Happy New Year).



Many Jews will send Jewish New Year greeting cards to their family and friends.

Preparation for Rosh Hashanah is very similar to Shabbat with the addition of a new **fruit being bought**. This fruit must be one that has **not been tasted in the past year**. This **symbolises renewal** and a special blessing will be recited before eating it. Another popular tradition during this holiday is **eating apples dipped in honey, and honey cake, these are symbols of wishing for a sweet new year**.

Like Shabbat, Rosh Hashanah will be brought in by **lighting candles**, and **no work is allowed** on the festival. The prayers for Rosh Hashanah are read from a special prayer book called a **machzor**. The high point of the morning service is the **blowing of the shofar** (a special horn) **100 times** – this is to stir people into **improving their moral behaviour and become closer to G-d**.

Another custom of Rosh Hashanah is **tashlich**, which takes place after the afternoon service of the first day of the holiday. This **involves reciting prayers by the banks of a river or lake; it symbolizes throwing one's sins into the waters**.

The Days of Awe - (The 10 days in between Yom Kippur and Rosh Hashanah)

Rosh Hashanah, the Jewish New Year, and Yom Kippur, the Day of Atonement, are known as the High Holy Days and are the most important days in the Jewish calendar. **The ten days from Rosh Hashanah to Yom Kippur are called the Days of Awe** or the Ten Days of Penitence. This is a time of **serious reflection when Jews consider the sins they have committed in the previous year, repent to G-d and make peace with those they have wronged by contacting them and asking for forgiveness**.



Jews believe that G-d judges all people on Rosh Hashanah and decides what our circumstances shall be during the following year. A Jewish person's actions of repentance, prayer and charity during the **Days of Awe can alter G-d's decision for the year ahead**, which is finalised on Yom Kippur. It is thought that G-d decides who will live and die in the following year in this time. This is why the **Days of Awe are very solemn**.

Yom Kippur – (Day of Atonement)

10 days after Rosh Hashanah comes Yom Kippur. For Jews, Yom Kippur is the holiest day of the year. It is also known as the **Day of Atonement** (making amends). It is a time for coming to terms with sins from the past year and seeking **repentance and forgiveness**.

Yom Kippur is celebrated in several ways

- **Special prayers are said**
- **Food is donated for the poor**
- **A special meal before fasting**
- **There are 5 services in the synagogue**
- **Candles are lit to welcome the festival**
- **Fasting by all who are eligible, fit and well**
- **People ask forgiveness from those they have hurt**



The Jewish day of atonement

Yom Kippur is the **holiest and most solemn day of the Jewish year**. In addition to the laws of observing Shabbat, on Yom Kippur people are **not allowed to wear leather shoes**. Other prohibitions during this day are **eating, drinking, bathing, anointing one's body and sexual relations**. **This fast lasts for 25-26 hours**.

Children, pregnant woman, the sick and the elderly are not required to fast. In Judaism, boys over the age of thirteen years and girls over the age of twelve are counted as adults.

Candles are lit to usher in the festival. The last meal before the fast begins is a festival meal. After this, there is a special evening service in the synagogue.
Gold jewellery is not worn as this is a reminder of the sin of the golden calf. This is the only evening service of the year in which men put on a **tallit** (a prayer shawl).



People pray five times on Yom Kippur. In addition to the three daily services there is **mussaf** (an additional service) after the morning service and a closing service called **Neilah**.

A main feature of the services is the confession, of which two versions are read. During the recitation which is said in an undertone, the members of the congregation strike **the left side of their chest with the right fist each time the phrase 'we have sinned' is said.** There are **more than thirty verses** that begin with this phrase. It is important to remember that even the most sincere recitation of this prayer does not pardon a person's sins against a fellow human – they must seek pardon from the person first. Saying sorry on the Day of Atonement is not intended to be an easy way out.

The book of Jonah is recited in the afternoon service to show G-d's compassion to all his creatures. At the end of Neilah, a single blast of the shofar announces that the fast is over. It is customary to begin the following morning service earlier than usual to show one's anxiety to start the year in a good way.

What do Jews actually believe about the afterlife?

OLAM HA-BA = THE WORLD TO COME?

There is not a great deal of teachings on this subject but what we do know is that Judaism believes that there is a form of life after death but **we should focus on life that we have now the OLAM HA-ZE.** It is not focused on how to get into heaven it is focused on life and how to live it.

Some Orthodox Jews may believe that the souls of good Jews go to a place that is similar to the Christian heaven or even that they are reincarnated through many lifetimes, in wait for the coming of the messiah when they will be resurrected into a perfect world and reunited with their family. They may also believe that the bad and wicked are tormented by demons from their own minds or will even cease to exist at death; they will not be resurrected at the time of the Messiah.

"Non-Jews frequently ask me, "do you really think you're going to go to Hell if you don't do such-and-such?" It always catches me a bit off balance, because the question of where I am going after death simply doesn't enter into the equation when I think about the mitzvot. We perform the mitzvot because it is our privilege and our sacred obligation to do so. We perform them out of a sense of love and duty, not out of a desire to get something in return."

Life after death is mentioned in the Torah but it is more of an afterthought and is not so much explicit but the question 'what happens when we die' came up a lot over the centuries. What it comes down to is that there are different opinions and ideas as there is no clear information but and so Olam Ha-Ba can be a spiritual realm where the souls go after the body dies or it could be a world to come when all of the righteous dead are resurrected to live in a perfect world of peace.

Task

Answer the following, in sentences, in your jotter

1. Why is repentance so important in Judaism?
2. How often should Jews repent?
3. What is the significance of Rosh Hashanah and repentance?
4. Summarise the activities during the Days of Awe.
5. How do Jews show repentance, obedience and commitment to Yom Kippur?
6. What is Olam Ha Ba? What can these beliefs mean for Jews?

Now choose one of the following tasks to complete:

1. Create an informative information poster on repentance and the related festivals.
2. Make an information leaflet about the festivals and repentance, like a beginner's guide.



JEWISH PRACTICES

Living according to the Torah

The Torah

Torah literally means 'teachings' or 'instructions'

The Torah is divided into 2 main sections which is each divided into further sub sections:

- THE **WRITTEN TORAH** which is also known as the **TENAKH**
- THE **ORAL TORAH** which is also known as the **TALMUD**



Within these 2 main sections there are sub-divisions:

The Talmud=
Different kinds of Rabbinic writings
(important Jews wrote this over many
years)

The Tenakh or Tenach =

1. Torah
2. Nevi'im
3. Ketuvim

The Torah is sacred and holy to all Jews; they believe the words written on the pages are the word of G-d and therefore should be treated with the utmost respect.

Study the Torah again and again, for everything is contained in it. (Ethics of the Fathers 5: 25)

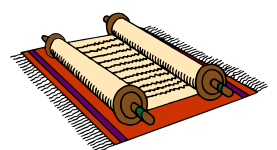
Every Jew must study the Torah, whether poor or rich, healthy or ailing, young or old... Ye shall study it day and night. (Mishneh Torah, Talmud Torah 1: 8)

The world depends on three things – on Torah study, on service (to G-d) and on kind deeds. (Ethics of the Fathers 1: 2)

The Torah we are going to focus on has **5 books** (or sections) and can also be referred to as the **Pentateuch** (It is known as the Old Testament to Christians). The 5 books are known as **Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers** and **Deuteronomy**.

The 5 Books of Moses are regarded as the most important part of the Tenakh

Torah can refer to any Jewish teachings but as a whole these teachings can be referred to as the **Tenakh**. Torah literally means 'instruction' or 'teaching'. The Torah is considered to contain guidelines for Judaism.



Jews regard the Five Books of Moses as the holiest part of the Bible or the written Torah. Jews believe that Moses wrote down everything G-d had taught him in these five books: Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers and Deuteronomy.

The Five Books of Moses start with the story of Creation and the early history of mankind, including that of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob – the ancestors of the Jewish people. They also describe how after becoming slaves in Egypt, the Israelites were freed by G-d under the leadership of Moses who received the Torah on Mount Sinai. In addition to the history of the children of Israel up till their entry into Canaan, the Five Books of Moses contain religious, civil and criminal law, and even instructions related to public health. They also contain a description of the construction of the **Tabernacle** which remained the focal point of religious service until the temple was built around five hundred years later.

The stories of their forefathers and of their ancestry tell Jews who they are; the laws and moral teachings tell Jews how to live and fulfil G-d's will. For centuries Jews have read the Torah, studied it and scholars have written commentaries to explain it. Jews have lived by the laws of the Torah and, in times of persecution, have died for them. The Torah scrolls contain the Five Books of Moses only. They are kept in the synagogue in the ark or 'aron kodesh' (meaning the Holy Ark). Each scroll is handwritten. The reader reads it with a 'yad', a pointer, so as not to damage it. Orthodox Judaism allows any male who can, to read from the scroll. Its reading is not restricted to a **rabbi** or **cantor**. Reform Judaism additionally allows females to read from the Torah scroll.



Nevi'im (Prophets)

The books of Joshua, Judges, Samuel and Kings describe the history of the Israelites from the death of Moses. Written as history, their main purpose is to teach religion, and in particular, to relate what happens to the Israelites as a consequence of how they have behaved towards G-d. The prophetic writings also contain the three books of Isaiah, Jeremiah and Ezekiel as well as twelve much shorter books of other prophets. Containing less history and more ethics, the purpose of these books is to teach faith, justice and compassion. Extracts from Nevi'im are read in synagogue at the end of the Torah. Readings on Shabbat and festivals and are known as the '**Haftarah**'.

Ketuvim (Writings)

The books in this section of the Torah are varied. It includes Proverbs and Ecclesiastes, which include many wise sayings. It also contains Psalms, many of which are used in regular worship in the daily and weekly prayers. Other books are read on certain festivals. For example, the Song of Songs is read on **Pesach**, Ruth is read on **Shavuot**, Esther is read on **Purim**, Ecclesiastes is read on **Sukkot** and the book of Jonah on Yom Kippur. The Nevi'im and Ketuvim, though sacred, are not considered to be as holy as the Five Books of Moses. This is because they were written either by prophets or people inspired by the divine spirit¹ while the Five Books of Moses were written through direct communication with G-d. This is considered more important than the writings of any person.

Task

Copy and complete the sentences below, finding the correct ending from the previous few pages:

The Tenakh contains...

The Torah contains...

Prophets contain...

Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers and Deuteronomy are known as...

The Torah scrolls contain only...

The Nevi'im...

The Ketuvim...

As previously mentioned, the Ten Commandments are among the most important of the commandments of the Torah and they summarise several other commandments under these ten headings. Four of the ten are positive commandments and the rest are negative.

- 1. Do not have any other gods.**
- 2. Do not make or worship idols.**
- 3. Do not disrespect or misuse God's name.**
- 4. Remember the Sabbath and keep it holy.**

The following commandments that describe the duties of man to his fellow man require further clarification as their breadth and scope often lead to misinterpretations.

5. Honour your mother and father.

The fifth commandment requires individuals to show respect, obedience and love to their mother and father alike. Such respect

- is continued on the death of the parents as it is also one's duty to
- respect the memory of the departed parent. Only in the rare cases
- where parents do not deserve such respect, e.g. parents guiding
- their children to commit an evil or criminal act, would disobedience to this commandment be allowed.

6. Do not commit murder.

The sixth commandment forbids the intentional killing of human beings, apart from capital punishments imposed by a judicial tribunal, or in a war for the defence of national and human rights, or in self-defence. In those circumstances, killing of a human being is regretfully allowed. However, this requires to be distinguished from wilful murder or homicide. This commandment stresses the sanctity of human life by forbidding the intentional killing of a human being.

7. Do not commit adultery

8. Do not steal.

The eighth commandment conveys the importance of respect for other people's property by emphasising that taking away someone else's property is wrong. This applies to acquiring property by cheating, embezzlement and forgery, and taking advantage of someone's ignorance even if the action might be strictly legal. It is from this commandment that the laws about injury and compensation, loans and inheritance have been developed.

9. Do not tell lies

As in the commandment that 'Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself', the word 'neighbour' here refers to one's fellow man. This ninth commandment is concerned with wrong that is inflicted by word of mouth. So it forbids all forms of slander, defamation and misrepresentation, whether of an individual or a group of people defined by race or religion. It also forbids perjury.

10. Do not be envious of others

The tenth commandment refers to man's instincts and impulses of predatory desire which are the source of most sins committed against one's fellow man. The man who uses his self-control effectively and masters his desires by not desiring his neighbour's belongings will not steal, murder or commit adultery. This is further explained by the Yetzer Harah and Yetzer Tov.

The Oral Law and the Talmud are also central to the Jewish faith. According to Jewish tradition when G-d gave Moses the Torah, he also taught him how the Commandments were to be kept. This was passed down by word of mouth and was part of the oral tradition. The Oral law made it possible for the Jews to live by the Torah as new conditions arose through time.

Halachah and the Oral Law

Halachah is the collective term used for Jewish law. The word can also be used for one particular law. According to Jewish tradition when G-d gave Moses the Torah, He also taught him how the commandments were to be kept. This was passed down by word of mouth and was part of the oral tradition. The Oral Law made it possible for Jews to live by the Torah as new conditions arose.

The first systematic arrangement of the Oral Law was made by Rabbi Akiva and served as the basis for the **Mishnah**. Rabbi Akiva classified the oral laws under specific headings and related the Oral Law to the Written Torah. Over the centuries new discoveries and social conditions have changed people's ways of living and thinking about the world we live in. For example, the development of information technology and medical science have led Jews to raise new questions, such as whether computer hacking is theft and whether surrogate motherhood and cloning is permitted. This is why rulings continue to be added to the Halachah. It is an ongoing process and is always based on the principles outlined in the Torah.

The Mishnah

The Oral Law consisting of interpretations of the written law was preserved and handed down by word of mouth from generation to generation by sages. This collection of oral laws was later written down by Rabbi Judah Hanasi ('Hanasi' literal meaning 'the prince') in a text known as the Mishnah at the end of the second century. It was a time of great persecution following the destruction of the Jewish kingdom by the Romans. Many scholars were killed and Rabbi Judah Hanasi was concerned that as a result much of the Oral Law might be totally lost.

The Gemarah

Just as the Mishnah was an interpretation and development of the Written Law, so the Gemarah was a record of the further interpretations and discussions of the Mishnah over many centuries. The Mishnah and the Gemarah together form the Talmud. In addition to law, it also contains a vast amount of material on all sorts of subjects such as medicine, social conditions, comments on events of the day and so on. It is therefore not only a record of discussions but an entire social history. A similar attempt to do this in Israel had also been made about fifty years earlier and is known as the Jerusalem Talmud. Of the two, the Babylonian Talmud is considered the more authoritative and is therefore what is normally referred to as the Talmud. To this day the Talmud is the main subject studied in a Jewish academy known as a **yeshiva** (pr. *ye-sheev-a*). If one studied at the rate of one page a day, it would take fourteen years to complete a study of the Talmud. The Talmud is written in a very cryptic form and can be difficult to interpret. Therefore many rabbis wrote commentaries to guide people through it. By far the most important is that of Rashi (Rabbi Shlomo ben Yitzhak) and today's standard printed Talmud contains Rashi's commentary along with others at the sides of the text.



Task 2

Complete the following, in sentences, in your jotter.

1. What is the Talmud?
2. Describe the different parts that can be referred to as the Talmud.
3. Look at the extract from the Talmud and the notes that accompany it
 - a. Write a comment about the size of the print of the extract.
 - b. How many types of print do you think there are?
 - c. Where is the page number?
 - d. How many commentaries are there?
4. How might Orthodox and Reform Jews interpret the Torah differently?
5. Why did the Rabbi think it was important to write the Oral Law down?

Obedience

A Jew's main goals of life are to obey G-d; to build and maintain a close relationship with him and to work toward a world of peace and tolerance. This means that they have duties to G-d but also to their fellow human being, an essential part of their religion.

We already know that Jews were given the **Ten Commandments** by which to live, this is the **BASIS FOR ETHICAL LIVING**. The first four commandments are about man and G-d and the others refer to how humans should treat one another. Each of the Commandments could be seen as some form of heading for all the other rules. However, it does not stop there; there are many more rules/pieces of guidance to which Jews should take note.

There are **613** different laws or **MITZVOT!**

These can be categorized into 3 headings:

- **Religious obligations**
- **Ethical behaviour**
- **Social obligations**



Each of the 613 commandments is called a **MITZVAH**

Another area in which Jews could seek guidance and advice on how to treat their fellow man is from the **ETHICS of the FATHERS**. These are a collection of wise sayings that can be found in six chapters of the Siddur (the Jewish prayer book). In this case, fathers means wise Jews who taught people about how to live moral lives:

1. Keep far from a bad neighbour, do not associate with a wicked person. (Ch.1: 7)
2. The world endures by three things: truth, justice and peace. (Ch.1: 18)
3. Reflect on three things and you will not fall into the grip of sin: know what is above you – an eye that sees, an ear that hears, and a book in which all your deeds are written. (Ch.2: 1)
4. Beware of rulers, for they befriend someone only for their own benefit; they act friendly when it benefits them, but they do not stand by someone in his time of need. (Ch.2: 3)
5. When your enemy falls, be not glad, and when he stumbles let your heart not be joyous. (Ch.4: 24, taken from the book of Proverbs 3: 5)
6. Who is rich? He who is happy with his lot. (Ch.4: 1)
7. Despise no man, and find fault with no thing; for there is no man that has not his hour and there is no thing that has not its place. (Ch.4: 3)

Task

In pairs, give an example of what each of these might look like in modern life. For example, if someone is being mean to others or bullying them you shouldn't be their friend or associate with them.

The following stories illustrate an ethical statement from Ethics of the Fathers. Read the stories and decide which ethics are being described.

Explain your answer and refer to the moral behaviour that, according to the ethic, should be displayed.

Paul is a friendly boy who likes to joke about and have a laugh. He likes going to the football match with his pals but as they are now working at weekends he has begun to go to the match on Saturdays with Ian. Ian's been in trouble at school for being cheeky to the teachers and for rowdy behaviour. At the match, Ian shouts abuse at another boy in the crowd and soon a fight breaks out. Ian runs off but Paul is spotted by the police and taken to the police station.

Alison and Caroline used to be friends but when Caroline began talking about Alison behind her back, their friendship ended abruptly. When Alison found out that Caroline had been telling lies about her, Alison decided to have nothing more to do with her. Caroline's been telling lies about other people too and has been found out. Nobody wants to talk to her and she is the only person in the class who has not been invited to Alison's New Year party.

Alison is delighted with this development and is looking forward to her party.

Source Leviticus 19: 9–18

⁹“When you harvest the crops of your land, do not harvest the grain along the edges of your fields, and do not pick up what the harvesters drop. ¹⁰It is the same with your grape crop—do not strip every last bunch of grapes from the vines, and do not pick up the grapes that fall to the ground. Leave them for the poor and the foreigners living among you. I am the LORD your G-d. ¹¹“Do not steal. “Do not deceive or cheat one another. ¹²“Do not bring shame on the name of your G-d by using it to swear falsely. I am the LORD. ¹³“Do not defraud or rob your neighbour. “Do not make your hired workers wait until the next day to receive their pay. ¹⁴“Do not insult the deaf or cause the blind to stumble. You must fear your G-d; I am the LORD. ¹⁵“Do not twist justice in legal matters by favouring the poor or being partial to the rich and powerful. Always judge people fairly. ¹⁶“Do not spread slanderous gossip among your people. “Do not stand idly by when your neighbour's life is threatened. I am the LORD.

¹⁷“Do not nurse hatred in your heart for any of your relatives. Confront people directly so you will not be held guilty for their sin. ¹⁸“Do not seek revenge or bear a grudge against a fellow Israelite, but love your neighbour as yourself. I am the LORD. ¹⁹“You must obey all my decrees. “Do not mate two different kinds of animals. Do not plant your field with two different kinds of seed. Do not wear clothing woven from two different kinds of thread.

Task

Look at each of these and discuss, in groups whether they are relevant advice in today's world or not.

1. What does it say about how to treat the poor?
2. What does it say about how to treat one another?
3. What does it say about respect to G-d?
4. Pick 3-5 of these and give an example of what these might look like if you were to obey them.

Consideration of the poor

Leviticus 19: 9–10 considers the needs of the poor. The term ‘gleaning’ refers to the ears of corn which fall to the ground at the time of reaping. The ‘fallen fruit’ refers to the single grapes which drop in the gathering. The Torah instructs the owner of a field or a vineyard not to gather the grain which the reapers have failed to remove, or the grapes which remain after the vintage as they are to be left for the poor, who include the fatherless, the widow and the stranger. In Judaism, the poor man is a ‘brother’ and when he is in need he is to be **given ungrudgingly with an open hand and an open heart**. The Torah **fears that justice may be compromised by sympathy for the poor and the helpless**. This verse does not mean that one should not grant respect to the poor but that if the poor individual is wrong, one’s compassion and sympathy must not overpower one’s duty to be just. Similarly one should not extend respect to, or prejudice in favour of, a ‘mighty’ or important person just because of his position or appearance.

Duties towards one’s fellow man

In Judaism, the love of G-d is incomplete without the love of one’s fellow man. The prohibition of harbouring a grievance against your fellow man is stated in verse 17. This originates from the **common rabbinical view that much of the hatred in the world is quite unjustified and includes groundless hatred for its own sake**. This includes racial and religious prejudices and bigotry. Verse 18 forbids repaying evil with further evil. Joseph’s behaviour on meeting his brothers after they had planned to get rid of him is among the noblest examples of forgiveness in the Biblical period.

‘Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself’ is the Golden Rule of Judaism and here is the first statement of this Golden Rule. Even the criminal condemned to die, say the rabbis, deserves our brotherly love, and we must spare him unnecessary suffering.

The prophets

The prophets were the **conscience of the Jewish people**. We already know of a couple. They **conveyed a moral and ethical message from G-d** to an often unheeding and uncaring populace. They pointed out the failings of what was often a materialistic society and called for justice and charity towards the poor and the disadvantaged. They foresaw and foretold the consequences for the people of Israel. Their message was important but was often unwelcome. Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel were three of the Major Prophets who preached morality. For example, Isaiah criticised the people for their indulgence in excessive luxury (Isaiah 3: 16–26); for their practice of idolatry (Isaiah 2: 6–10); and for social injustice (Isaiah 5: 23); and Jeremiah criticised the prevalent idol-worship, the desertion of G-d and His Torah by the priests and prophets of Israel, the terrible social injustice, corruption and widely practiced sexual immorality. The twelve Minor Prophets were Hosea, Joel, Amos, Obadiah, Jonah, Micah, Nachum, Habakkuk, Zephaniah, Haggai, Zechariah and Malachi; they also harshly criticised the people for their lack of social justice, whereby they trampled upon the rights of the underprivileged.

Task

Answer the following questions, in sentences.

1. In your own words, summarise the metaphors used in relation to the treatment of the poor.
2. Explain the ‘Duties towards one’s fellow man’.
3. What is meant by the term ‘prophet’?
4. Name the three Main Prophets and state what they preached about.
5. List the twelve Minor Prophets.

Relationship with G-d

The main goal in Judaism is to build and maintain a good relationship with G-d. This can be done in lots of ways. Prayer is one of these.

Prayer is an important practice in Judaism – they believe that it helps them remain close to G-d. Prayers are said both in the morning and evening. At Synagogue services prayers are said in Hebrew. Special prayers are said on festivals and Shabbat as well as simple prayers being said when a natural occurrence happens – like thunder or a rainbow.

THE SHEMA

The Shema is the **most important prayer in Jewish tradition** – it is the **mission statement of their faith**. The prayer is said at both the morning and evening services and will be the first prayer that Jewish children will be taught.

MEZUZAH

The Mezuzah is a **small case, which contains the Shema**. You will find it on the **right-hand-side of the vast majority of Jew's front door frames**. You might also find it on the right-hand-side of every other doorframe in the house (apart from the bathroom and kitchen). It displays the **importance of the prayer, G-d is present in the house and that the occupants follow his law**.

TEFILLIN

The tefillin is an item that a **Jewish male will wear during weekday services**. The word **tefillin actually means 'prayers'**. The tefillin has 2 parts = **one worn on the arm (near the heart to show that he loves G-d) and one worn on the head (to show he is thinking of G-d)**. It consists of a leather strap and a wooden box with writings from the Torah in it.

Prayer is a central focus in the Jewish faith. It is a way of remaining close to G-d and keeping His Commandments. Prayer can be done anywhere and at any time, but there are also set times and traditions that orthodox Jews are expected to observe.

The **Siddur** is the Jewish **daily prayer book**. There are different sections to read at specific times of the year. It is printed in **Hebrew** with page-by-page translations so those that are not familiar with Hebrew can turn to a language they understand. Although Jews can pray to G-d in any language, Hebrew is regarded as the most appropriate language and, is generally, the language of Jewish prayer worldwide. This allows Jews from different countries to follow a synagogue service anywhere in the world.

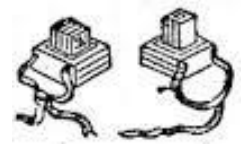
Each day there are three services in the Synagogue: **shacharit, minchah and ma'ariv**. **Observant Jews will pray at these three times each day**. Observant men usually go to the synagogue as there is an obligation to pray with a **minyan** (the person who leads the services in a synagogue). Women are not under any obligation to pray but can choose to do so. On Shabbat and festivals many people attend the synagogue if they can.

When praying, Jewish men **cover their heads as a mark of respect during prayer** by wearing a hat or a **kipah** (pronounced kee-pah), which is a skull cap. Some very observant Jewish men wear a kipah or other head covering at all times. A tallit, or prayer shawl is also worn at some times.

The most important part of Jewish prayer, and in fact the **most important declaration of the Jewish faith is the Shema** – it is recited in the morning and evening services as well as being said before going to sleep.

A solid reminder of the Shema is found in a **tefillin** and **mezuazah**. Both are used as reminders of the importance of the Shema.

TEFILLIN =two leather boxes containing scrolls with biblical text on them that is worn on Jewish males over the age of thirteen during morning prayer.



MEZUAZAH = a wooden case containing the Shema and two biblical passages on parchment. These boxes are fastened to the top right side of each doorpost in the house



Deuteronomy 6:4-9 - The Shema

⁴“Listen, O Israel! The LORD is our G-d, the LORD alone. ⁵And you must love the LORD your G-d with all your heart, all your soul, and all your strength. ⁶And you must commit yourselves wholeheartedly to these commands that I am giving you today. ⁷Repeat them again and again to your children. Talk about them when you are at home and when you are on the road, when you are going to bed and when you are getting up. ⁸Tie them to your hands and wear them on your forehead as reminders. ⁹Write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates.

Daily prayers also include blessings before and after food, and at other times during the day. Each type of food has its own special blessing. For example, there is a special blessing before eating fruit and another before eating bread. A part of the Torah, called Deuteronomy 8: 10 commands Jews to bless G-d after they have eaten.

Jews are also known to give **special blessings for other things in the world**, children are encouraged to say so that it becomes natural to them to **thank G-d for these everyday occurrences**. Prayer plays a central role in the everyday life of Jews!

Task

Complete the following, in full sentences, in your jotter.

1. What is the purpose of prayer generally?
2. Do you think non-religious people can pray?
3. What is the purpose of prayer in Judaism?
4. When might Jews pray in Judaism?
5. Where can Jews find set prayers?
6. Do all Jews need to learn Hebrew?
7. What does the Shema tell Jews to do?
8. Draw and label a Mezuzah and Tefillin.
9. In what ways do these physical objects help Jews to pray?
- 10 Using an A4 piece of paper, create a guide to prayer with all of the different aspects and prayer aids. The format of you displaying your information is up to you.

The Importance of the Torah

We already know that the Torah is extremely important to the Jews – it is a book of their history but it also contains the rules of their religion. **There are 613 rules in the Torah**, each of which many Jews try their best to follow.

It contains rules on:

FOOD



SHABBAT



WORSHIP



ETHICAL LIVING

Jewish Responsibilities

Responsibilities are things that human beings feel they should do – like parents having the responsibility to make sure their children go to school or students having the responsibility to revise for exams. Each and every person has responsibilities, to themselves, their families, friends, job, society as a whole – whether they choose to carry out these responsibilities or not is a different thing!!

Jews also have responsibilities – some are exactly the same as other human beings but there are also specific ones that go hand in hand with their religion: they are another way of maintaining a good relationship with G-d.

Lets take a closer look at some of these responsibilities

Tzedzakah

Shabbat

Brit Milah

Lashon
Harah

Bar/Bat
Mitzvah

Kashrut

Shabbat

Shabbat is the Jewish holy day, or day of rest. It begins at sunset on Friday and ends at sunset on Saturday. It is a day of worship and no work will be carried out, this means that special preparations are made to ensure this.

Brit Milah

Brit Milah is an ancient Jewish tradition that began during the Exodus. It is the circumcision of Jewish baby boys on the eighth day of their lives. It is regarded as a covenant with G-d.

Tzedakah

Jewish people should be charitable. If possible, they should give at least 10% of their income to charity. From a young age, children are taught the importance of being charitable and the conduct in which it should be done.

Lashon Harah

This literally means evil tongue. Jewish people should avoid gossiping or talking badly about people as the affects can be really bad.

Bar/Bat Mitzvah

Bar Mitzvah and, the more modern, Bat Mitzvah are Jewish rites of passage that symbolise the coming of age of a Jewish child. The ceremony occurs at the age of 12 for girls and 13 for boys. This event is very important as after the ceremony the boy or girl is regarded as an adult.

Kashrut

Kashrut is the Jewish food laws. Of the 613 laws Jews have, many of them are related to food. Foods they can eat are called Kosher.

Task

Answer the following, in sentences, in your jotter.

1. In your own words, explain what you think responsibilities are.
2. Do you have any responsibilities? List these in your jotters.
3. Give a brief description on the six Jewish responsibilities mentioned.

Shabbat

Shabbat is the Jewish holy day – it is a day of rest where no work will be carried out. The traditions of Shabbat are kept because this is part of the 613 mitzvot – they have the special name: the **39 forbidden mishnah**. On Shabbat Jews are simulating an action taken by G-d during creation; for six days G-d created everything in the world and on the seventh day he was happy with all he had done and rested.

Shabbat begins at sunset on Friday evening and ends on Saturday evening when three stars can be seen in the sky. Nowadays, Jews will keep a special diary of the times Shabbat begins and ends every week so that

there is never any confusion. The reason Shabbat begins in the evening is that when G-d was creating the earth night always preceded day and so the Jews do the same.

Remember that orthodox and Reform Jews may keep Shabbat differently.

There are several stages of Shabbat, we will go through each in turn:

Preparations

Because Jews are not supposed to do any work on Shabbat there are special preparations that are made every week before it begins:

- The house is cleaned and tidy ready for Shabbat
- Food is prepared and kept warm on a special hotplate
- The table is set with the best cutlery and linen
- Orthodox Jews will set timers for heating and lights to come on when they are needed
- The family will dress in their best clothes



Welcoming Shabbat

The mother, or woman, of the house has the job of welcoming Shabbat into their home:

- 2 Shabbat candles are lit
- She welcomes Shabbat with her arms
- The mother will cover her eyes and recite a special Hebrew blessing

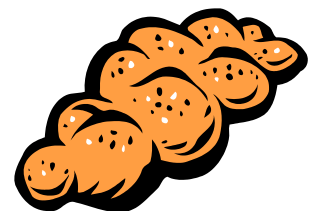
The family will then, normally, go to the synagogue for the evening service



Friday Evening Blessing

After the synagogue service the family return home for another special blessing, this time the father of the house recites it:

- The father blesses the children
- He says Kiddush, a special blessing over wine
- Everyone washes their hands before the blessing over the challot (special plaited bread)
- The bread is broken and shared with friends and family at the table, then a special meal begins



Saturday Morning Synagogue Service

On the Saturday morning Jews are expected to attend a service in the Synagogue, this is called the shacharit. During this service special parts of the Torah, called the Sidra, are read. A communal Kiddush is then held afterwards.

The Closing Blessings

When three stars can be seen in the sky, Shabbat is over. This is time for the Havdalah ceremony where 4 blessings are recited:



1. The first blessing is over a cup of wine.
2. The second is done over fragrant spices (normally cloves and cinnamon)
3. The third blessing is recited over the light of the plaited candle.
4. The final blessing is the Havdalah blessing itself, which acknowledges the separation of the holy day from the working day.



After the blessings wine is drunk, a few drops of which is used to extinguish the candle.

Task

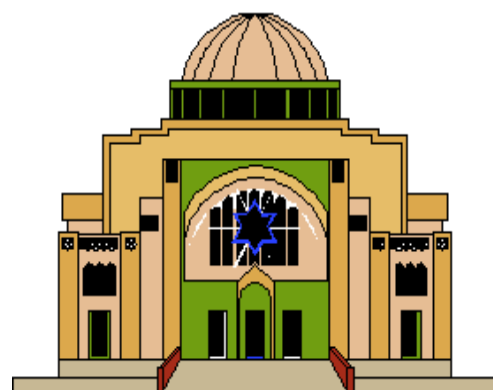
Copy and complete the sentences with the correct endings:

Orthodox Jews will...	Strictly observe the laws of Shabbat. Use Shabbat as a day off work. Observe most of the Shabbat rules.
Shabbat begins with...	The mother turning off the lights. The father welcoming Shabbat with her arms. The mother welcoming Shabbat with her arms.
The Kiddush is...	A special prayer. A type of bread. A blessing over wine.
The Sidra is...	A part of the Torah. A part of the Nevi'im. A part of the Ketuvim.
Shabbat is over when...	It gets dark. At 6pm. When 3 stars can be seen in the sky. Use Shabbat as a day off work.
Havdalah is...	4 Blessings at the end of Shabbat. A poem that is read on Shabbat. Not compulsory on Shabbat.

The Synagogue

The synagogue is a holy building where Jewish people worship God, learn about their religion and celebrate family and religious events. The synagogue is not only a place to pray in. It is also a community centre with activities for all age groups. Some have classrooms, youth clubs and libraries where people can go to study.

Jewish people call the synagogue a 'shul', which means 'school'. Services are held everyday in the synagogue and in progressive synagogues a Rabbi leads the services. In an orthodox synagogue, the Rabbi or a member of the congregation leads the service.



As they go into the synagogue Jews wash their hands as a symbol that they are fit for prayer. They then say a prayer of thanks to God for the fact that they can worship him.

Inside a Synagogue

All synagogues are built facing the city of Jerusalem, where Solomon built the first temple in the 10th century BCE. This city is close to the heart of every Jew.



The **Ark** is the most important thing in a synagogue. It is a special cupboard at the front of the main room where the scrolls are kept.

In front of the Ark is a lamp. The flame never goes out to remind Jews that God is always present and to remind them of the lamp which was in the temple.

The **bimah** is in the middle of the synagogue. This is a raised platform from which the Torah is read.

Using the synagogue

Synagogues are like community centres, they bring Jews together to:

- **Celebrate.** The most important events are held in the synagogue – Bar Mitzvah, marriage and funeral celebrations.
- **Learn.** Judaism stresses the importance of learning, from the beginning to the end of life. Children and young people are often taught by the rabbi on Sunday mornings
- **Relax.** Youth clubs, crèches and mother and baby groups together with clubs and societies all use synagogue facilities.
- **Worship.** Every Sabbath day, men, women and children come to the synagogue to worship God. They also attend synagogue at the many Jewish festivals.

Worship

THE POWER OF WORDS

The commandment against speaking *lashon harah* is probably the hardest one to follow. Some would say it's more difficult than keeping kosher and much harder than not working on Shabbat.

***Lashon harah* means "evil tongue," or as we might say in English "bad mouthing."** Almost every discussion about *lashon harah* begins with this story:

Once there was a man who had said awful things about someone. Realizing that he has done something awful, he goes to his rabbi and asks, "Rabbi, what can I do?" The rabbi thinks a bit and tells the man to bring him a feather pillow. The man brings the pillow and the rabbi tells him to go outside, rip the pillow open, and shake out the feathers. The man does that. As he shakes out the feathers, the wind catches them, and they start flying everywhere. The man comes back to the rabbi and says, "I did as you said. Now what?" The rabbi says, "Now go back outside and pick up all the feathers." The man looks startled and says, "How can I? The wind took them! I don't even know where they are now." The rabbi says, "Exactly. Just like your words. Once they're out, it's impossible to get them back"

What is *lashon harah*?

By definition, *lashon harah* is like **gossiping**. An important thing to remember about *lashon harah* is that, by definition, the thing being said is true. Spreading lies about another person, is called *motzi shem ra*.






Why is it hard to avoid *lashon harah*?

One reason that we seem drawn to speaking *lashon harah* is that it gives us a sense of power and being in control. It can be very hard to avoid, especially at school because if you are not involved in the gossiping then you may feel excluded from a group.

Why is *lashon harah* so bad?

The rabbis teach that *lashon harah* is like killing three people because it destroys the reputation of the victim, damages the perceptions of the listener, and diminishes the standing of the speaker. It can create division and separation.

Like any other Jewish law, there are fine points about *lashon harah*:

-  **you are not to say derogatory things about anyone whether they are true or not**
-  **you are not to imply derogatory things about anyone**
-  **you are not to listen to derogatory things about anyone, and if you do, you're not to believe it**

The restriction on listening to *lashon harah* seems odd. How could hearing something bad about someone hurt you? Here's a story to help you understand:

"A friend was talking about a mutual friend. She was angry, saying nasty things about him. After seeing that I wasn't joining in, she said, "Well, he's said some bad things about you too." I asked, "What?" She wouldn't tell me at first, but I insisted. Finally, she told me what he had said about me. She had been right. It wasn't nice. At that instant, my friendship with these two people changed forever. I was hurt that she told me. I was hurt that he said it. It was hard to not be wary around them. I couldn't believe she told me something that bad. And I was never really sure that he actually said what she said he said."

When is *lashon harah* permissible?

But what if someone is bad? What if you know someone about to go into business with someone known for shady deals? What if your friend is involved with someone known to be violent? In such cases, we are permitted to speak about these things. But the laws of permissible *lashon harah* are very clear. You can't excuse *lashon harah* by saying "I'm just trying to help."

You are allowed to speak *lashon harah* to help someone, to prevent someone from being victimized, or to resolve major disputes but only when what you say is based on first-hand information, what you're saying is true and accurate, the person who is in the wrong has been spoken to and refuses to change, there is no other way to meet the goal, and what you say will not cause undue harm.



Task

Complete the following, in sentences, in your jotter.

1. What does *lashon harah* mean?
2. What does this responsibility mean for Jewish people?
3. How difficult or easy do you think it is to avoid *lashon harah*? Give examples and reasons for your answer.
4. What was the meaning of the story on above?
5. Copy and complete the following.

Lashon Harah means _____. It is like _____ or bad mouthing. It is very hard not to talk about people badly. It is bad because it can hurt a lot of people. It can hurt the person it is about, the person who is listening and the person who is saying it. It creates _____. It is even bad to _____ to it.

Divisions gossiping listen evil tongue

Tzedakah = Charity

Charity is a fundamental part of the Jewish way of life

Traditional Jews give at least **ten percent of their income to charity**. Traditional Jewish homes commonly have a *pushke* which is a box for collecting coins for the poor, and coins are routinely placed in the box. Jewish youths are continually going from door to door collecting for various worthy causes. In many ways, charitable donation has taken the place of animal sacrifice in Jewish life: giving to charity is an almost instinctive Jewish response to express thanks to G-d, to ask forgiveness from G-d, or to request a favor from G-d. According to Jewish tradition, the spiritual benefit of giving to the poor is so great that a beggar actually does the giver a favour by giving a person the opportunity to perform *tzedakah*.



The Meaning of "Tzedakah"

"Tzedakah" is the Hebrew word for the acts that we call "charity" in English: giving aid, assistance and money to the poor and needy or to other worthy causes. However, the nature of *tzedakah* is very different

from the idea of charity. The word "charity" suggests benevolence and generosity, a magnanimous act by the wealthy and powerful for the benefit of the poor and needy. The word "tzedakah" is derived from the Hebrew [root](#) Tzade-Dalet-Qof, meaning righteousness, justice or fairness. **In Judaism, giving to the poor is not viewed as a generous act; it is simply an act of justice and righteousness, the performance of a duty, giving the poor their due.**

The Obligation of Tzedakah

Giving to the poor is an obligation in Judaism, a duty that cannot be forsaken even by those who are themselves in need. Some sages (wise teachers) have said that tzedakah is the highest of all commandments, equal to all of them combined, and that a person who does not perform tzedakah is equivalent to an idol worshipper. Tzedakah is one of the three acts that gain us forgiveness from our sins. It is said that all who have sinned can gain forgiveness through teshuvah (repentance), tefilah (prayer) and tzedakah.

The obligation to perform tzedakah can be fulfilled by:

- giving money to the poor
- to health care institutions
- to synagogues or to educational institutions
- It can also be fulfilled by supporting your children beyond the age when you are legally required to, or supporting your parents in their old age
- The obligation includes giving to both Jews and gentiles; contrary to popular belief, Jews do not just "take care of our own."

Levels of Tzedakah

Certain kinds of tzedakah are considered more meritorious than others. The Talmud describes these different levels of tzedakah. The levels of charity, from the least meritorious to the most meritorious, are:

- Giving begrudgingly
- Giving less than you should, but giving it cheerfully.
- Giving after being asked
- Giving before being asked
- Giving when you do not know the recipient's identity, but the recipient knows your identity
- Giving when you know the recipient's identity, but the recipient doesn't know your identity
- Giving when neither party knows the other's identity
- Enabling the recipient to become self-reliant

Task

Answer the following, in sentences, in your jotter:

1. Why is tzedakah important?
2. Pick 3 out of the 8 examples of ways in which Jews should and should not give to charity and write a short example of what this might look like in real life.
3. Copy and complete the following,

Tzedakah is _____ either money or time to charity. Jewish people are brought up being told this is something they should all do, it is not a _____ it is justice, just the right thing to do. Once they are working they should give at least _____% of their wages to charity per _____. Giving to charity should not be something people do to _____ good to others. They should do it _____ and in a way that is not embarrassing for the person receiving it.

Discretely giving ten look month duty

Brit Milah

Brit Milah (pronounced breet meelah) is the term given to male circumcision, the oldest Jewish ritual and one that has remained unchanged up to the present day. Circumcision is practiced by many people in the world but it is only for the Jewish people that it is a **sign of their acceptance of their relationship with G-d**. It is also an **external symbol of the covenant**, first made between G-d and Abraham.

Brit Milah should take place on the 8th day after birth, even if this falls on Shabbat or Yom Kippur. The only factor that allows the postponement of the circumcision is the baby's health.

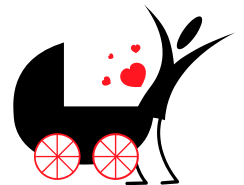
Being Jewish is a matter of birth except in the case of a convert, so circumcision does not turn a baby into a Jew. According to Jewish law an uncircumcised Jew is still a Jew if it has a Jewish mother.

A circumcision is an occasion for celebration for the family and the community. Today the preferred place for this to take place is at home (sometimes it occurs in a hospital but essential blessings are still read). **Short prayers and blessings are recited**. The honour of being G-dparents is given to selected friends or family. The baby is also named at this time. Whilst it is preferable to have a minyan for this event it is not a requirement. The ceremony normally ends with a celebratory meal.

Circumcision has become a controversial issue worldwide with claims that it causes unnecessary pain and is an infringement of the child's rights. However, while the health benefits are very evenly balanced it is important to remember that it is not being done for health reasons but as an act of faith indicating a belief in G-d and the covenant. It is carried out even by the non-observant Jew. It is a religious right upheld by human-rights legislation. Those who perform the circumcision are highly skilled after long training and there is a minimum of upset to the infant.

EXTRA INFORMATION

When a baby is born into a family it is a joyous occasion. Many families take a lot of time and care to pick a name – some pick a name by what the baby suits, parents or grandparents names, famous people or because of its meaning. In a Jewish family a child is given a Hebrew name and an ordinary name. On the eighth day of a Jewish male's life they are given their name but there is another significant event – the Brit Milah ceremony.



Brit Milah is a Jewish tradition that began approximately 4000 years ago. It is the circumcision of an eight-day-old Jewish baby boy. The Torah says that G-d told Abraham that when his son, Isaac, was eight days old he should circumcise him. This was a sign of a special covenant, or relationship between G-d and the Jewish people. So, this tradition has been withheld in the Jewish faith, and thus the covenant lives on.

THE FACTS

- Circumcision is a procedure where the foreskin is cut away from the penis
- Brit Milah is performed by a specially trained Jew called a **'mohel'** who is often also a rabbi
- Families will often gather at home for the ceremony but it is sometimes done in a clinic or hospital

Girls are just as precious but are welcomed into the Jewish faith in a slightly different way: at the first Shabbat after the baby is born her father is called to a reading of the Torah at the Shabbat service to announce her name. This is how she is welcomed into the Jewish faith.

Task

Answer the following questions, in sentences, in your jotter.

1. What is Brit Milah symbolic of?
2. Do **you** think Brit Milah is an infringement of the child's rights? Create a balanced answer and explain all of your points.
3. What first and middle names might you pick for your children? Give reasons for your choices.
4. What is Brit Milah? Give a full explanation.
5. Why is Brit Milah a Jewish tradition?
6. How are baby girls welcomed in the Jewish faith?
7. Do you think Brit Milah is a cruel and unnecessary tradition or part of being Jewish?

Bar Mitzvah and Bat Mitzvah

Bar Mitzvah - literally meaning a 'son of the commandment', Bar Mitzvah is the **term given to a boy when he reaches religious maturity**, which in Jewish law takes place at the **age of 13**. This is when he becomes a full member of the community. From this time onwards, he becomes **personally responsible for observing the commandments**, which incorporate his entire religious behaviour. However, this does not mean that his parents no longer continue to encourage, teach and advise him how to behave and he should continue to respect them and follow their good advice.

The boy is initiated into the ranks of the community by fulfilling two mitzvot (obligations) which, as a child, he is not obliged to do. These are:

- **Wearing the tefillin during weekday morning prayers**
- **Being called upon to perform the reading of the Law in the Synagogue**



The Bar Mitzvah boy will receive instructions on how to put on the tefillin and read from the Torah scroll. This involves a lot of practice.

Most Bar Mitzvah celebrations take place on the Shabbat after the boy's 13th birthday. Many friends and relatives will come to the synagogue to hear him. Several male relatives and friends will be honoured by being called to recite a blessing or participate in some other way. The rabbi usually addresses the Bar Mitzvah boy in his sermon and congratulates him.

Bar Mitzvah celebrations take place at any time after the service and take many forms – a meal or a party for example. **Celebrations may be left until after Shabbat in keeping with the Shabbat laws.** The boy receives presents from family and friends.

As a male adult the Bar Mitzvah boy is now counted as an adult and fully obliged to observe the fast days and he may be called upon to read from the Torah at any time.



Bat Mitzvah - literally meaning 'daughter of the commandment', Bat Mitzvah is a **term given to a girl when she reaches Jewish adulthood**. Unlike Bar Mitzvah it is a **more recently invented custom**. Judaism accepts that girls mature earlier than boys and so sets the **age at 12**. This is when a **girl reaches religious maturity and is responsible for observing the commandments**. Though girls **do not have required mitzvot** to perform when they reach adulthood but, they too are obliged to fully observe the fast days.

Whilst they can celebrate the day on which they attain personal responsibility in their faith, they do not have the same requirement to study for this day although they may do so.

During a girl's Bat Mitzvah a girl may **speak about the sidra** (from the Torah), **the significance of the day** or make a **speech about the theme of the service for that day**. This will display her knowledge of Judaism. Orthodox Judaism does not allow women to read from the Torah or to lead prayers.

The celebration of a girl's Bat Mitzvah is similar to that of a boy's Bar Mitzvah.

Girls can also be part of a ceremony called a **Bat Chayil** which can be an alternative to a Bat Mitzvah. Whilst practices vary from community to community, this ceremony commonly takes place on a Sunday in a synagogue where the girl, or group of girls, reads in Hebrew from a passage of their choice. The ceremony is normally followed by presents and celebrations at home or in the synagogue hall. It is looked upon as a graduation from Jewish studies.

Task

Complete the following, in your jotters.

1. Copy and complete the following table to show the similarities and differences between Bar and Bat Mitzvah.

SIMILARITIES	DIFFERENCES

2. What does it mean for the Jewish boys and girls once they have undertaken these ceremonies?
3. Have you ever been involved in a rite of passage? Write a paragraph about what happened and the significance of the event (i.e. christening, wedding, graduation).
4. Make an invite to a Bar or Bat Mitzvah. It is for someone who is not Jewish so you will have to detail what it is and the traditions involved.

It is very important for Jews to learn and read Hebrew. Not being able to read Hebrew can affect prayer and following the service in the synagogue. The Bar Mitzvah, Bat Mitzvah and Bat Chayil ceremonies involve young Jewish men and woman in attaining a level of competence in Hebrew and Jewish studies that will help them perform their obligations. This is done by direct teaching in classes and by parents at home by example, traditions and creating the appropriate Jewish environment.

Adults are encouraged to continue with their study of Judaism to provide answers to questions which can challenge the Jewish faith and its practices as well as to understand the continued relevance of Judaism in the modern world.

Kashrut - Dietary Laws

You may already be familiar with some of the Jewish food laws

Kosher = food that is allowed

Treifah = food that is not permitted

Orthodox Jews are very strict about food laws – there are very clear guidelines as to what is kosher and what is considered Treifah:

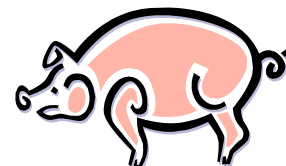
KOSHER

- All plants
- Animals with cloven hooves and that chew the cud (e.g. sheep, cows, goats, deer etc)
- Birds are kosher only if they are not birds of prey (chicken, turkey, grouse etc)
- Fish is kosher as long as it has fins, scales and a backbone (trout, cod, mackerel, salmon etc)



TREIFAH

- Animals that do not have a cloven hoof or chew the cud (e.g. pigs and camels)
- Any birds of prey (e.g. hawks, eagles, owls etc)
- Seafood that does not have fins, scales or a backbone (e.g. all shellfish, eels etc)



PREPARATION

Kosher animals and birds must be killed according to the method of **shechitah**. This method is thought of as the most humane way of killing an animal: the cutting involves the least amount of pain because the animal loses consciousness immediately. **Causing pain to any living thing is strictly forbidden in Jewish law.** Any animal or bird that is killed by another method is not Kosher. Carrying out shechitah requires a great deal of training and is a very responsible job – the person has to be deeply religious and has to have passed an examination on shechitah.



Once dead the meat has to go through an important process to remove ALL blood from it. This is because the Torah forbids the consumption of blood. To ensure all blood is removed the meat or poultry it is soaked in water for a set time before it is laid out on thin boards to drain, covering it with salt. This again is for a set time. Finally, the meat is rinsed thoroughly to remove all of the salt. This can be done at home but this special meat can be bought at a

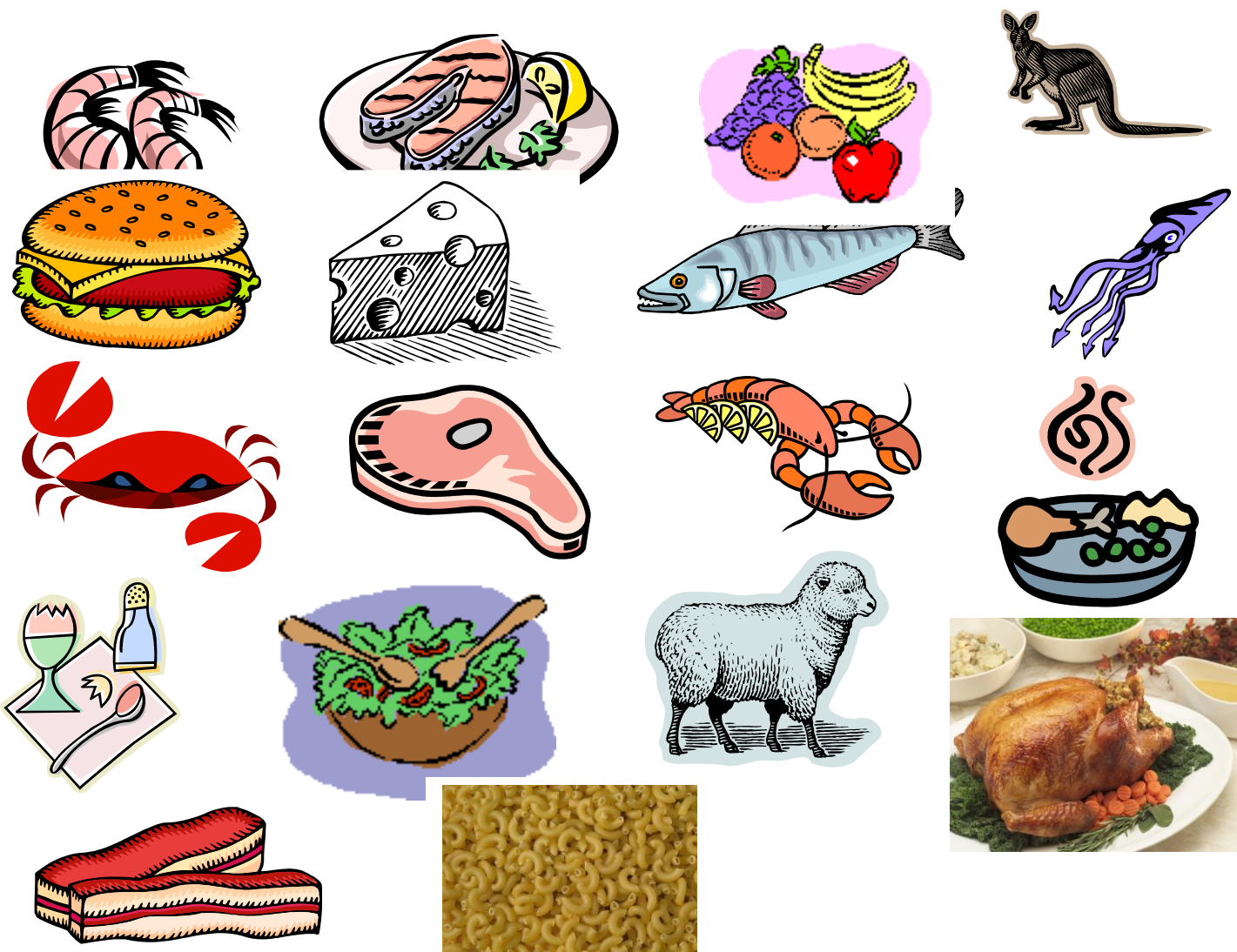
kosher butcher. (this includes not eating eggs with blood spots in them – a Jew would break it into a cup first to make sure).

Meat and dairy products are kept completely separate. This is due to the commandment ‘you must not cook a young goat in its mother’s milk’ in Exodus and Deuteronomy. **A meal will not be prepared that mixes dairy and meat** – no cheese burgers, no creamy sauce on steak and no creamy mashed potato with roast chicken. After a meat meal no milk products will be eaten for a period of 3-6 hours. Orthodox Jews would even go so far as to keep separate utensils for preparing, cooking and eating milk and meat meals – they may also keep separate plates, dish cloths, towels and even 2 sinks to avoid the products mixing.

Foods that contain neither meat or dairy produce (i.e. veg, fish and eggs) and have not been prepared using meat or dairy utensils are called **parev**. Parev foods may be eaten with both meat or dairy foods. As Kashrut forbids the eating of dairy foods immediately after a meat dish, many deserts have to be parev.



Keeping Kashrut can be very difficult for observant Jews – eating out in non-kosher restaurants is a definite no. Jews can also find it hard to have kosher food in hospitals and school. Reform Jews may not find this as difficult as orthodox Jews as they are not as strict.



Task

Complete the following, in your jotters.

1. What is Kashrut?
2. Make a list of foods Jews CAN eat, and a list of foods Jews CAN NOT eat.
3. Copy and complete the following.

Rules for Eating Meat

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Rules for Eating Fish

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Rules for Eating Fruit & Veg


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Rules for Eating Birds


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Rules for Eating Meat & Dairy

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Jewish Identity and belonging

Judaism teaches that anyone born to a Jewish mother is necessarily Jewish. This means that for most Jews no conscious decision is involved in being a Jew. In other faiths it may be necessary to take certain steps of initiation in order to be accepted as a member of the community but this is not the case with Judaism.

The only physical requirement of Jews is for all males to be circumcised at a Brit Milah (Covenant of cutting), usually done when the baby is eight days old (dependant on health). However, not being circumcised does not mean that the male is not a Jew. Similarly, although a large majority of Jewish boys have a Bar Mitzvah ceremony, this is a tradition but not a requirement. Even if a Jew is completely non-practising and a non-believer it does not stop them being a Jew.

‘Belonging’ is an essential aspect of Judaism. To be a Jew is to be part of a community and a tradition as well as a religion. The Jews are G-d’s ‘chosen people’ and the individual is therefore part of their own family, their local community, and of worldwide Jewry. The necessity of living by the mitzvot and, in particular, the requirements of kashrut and of the Sabbath, mean that there are elements of Jewish life which can be lived only within the Jewish community.

Faith and commitment are intertwined through practice and tradition and almost every aspect of Jewish life is influenced by religion: eating; clothes; prayer; the structure of the week and of the year.

Although Judaism stresses the very important roles of the family and the community, the relationship with G-d is both collective and personal.

The community and the preservation of it and its traditions are central. Traditionally, if a person married outside of the faith, the father would rip his clothes and say the Mourner’s Kaddish because their child was now dead to them. This demonstrates the importance of the integrity of the community and the need to fulfil the first commandment in the scriptures: ‘Be fertile and increase, fill the earth and master it ...’ (Genesis 1:28a).

The Sabbath, the festivals and the sharing of rites of passage all serve to bring the community together.

The consequences of the 20th century Holocaust were the devastation of the traditional Jewish communities and the shtetls (small Jewish communities in Eastern Europe).

The second half of the 20th century saw the re-establishment of Israel in the form of the modern state as well as new communities being established around the world. However, these communities have continued to shrink in recent years because of assimilation and intermarriage.

Family and Community

Within a Jewish family, faith is demonstrated in the home through family life and worship as well as in the synagogue.

The home will have a mezuzah at every door except the bathroom as a constant reminder of the teachings of the Shema. There may be a small piece of wall unplastered or undecorated as a reminder of the

destruction of the Temple. The kitchen is equipped with separate sets of utensils, crockery and equipment for the division of meat and milk foods.

There may be daily family prayer in the home but the key event is the Sabbath. Each week the family eat the Friday night meal together as an act of worship, the Sabbath candles are lit, the children are blessed and a man will praise his wife for her devotion to him, the family and their faith. The family then stay together throughout Saturday, probably worshipping at the synagogue together on Saturday morning, until the service of Havdalah (separation) which marks the end of the sabbath and the return to the secular world.

Many Jews who may not be very observant during the week will nevertheless ensure that they are together as a family on the Sabbath.

Family attendance at the synagogue for festivals, but particularly for the weekly Sabbath brings the Jewish community together in worship and socially. The family has always been at the centre of Jewish life and one of its major strengths as it is often in the home that the faith is most observed, stories are told and tradition maintained.

Judaism is a belief system but also a complete way of life. As such it affects both individuals and the wider community. In many countries of the Diaspora Jews are found in fairly close communities, they share a religion, a culture, a way of life and sometimes even a language.

The effect on the wider local community may be minimal as often Sabbath attendance on a Saturday goes unobserved in the bustle of weekend life. The requirements of being able to walk to the synagogue on the Sabbath and also the need to have shops which sell kosher food means that many Jewish communities tend to be small and tight knit. However, in many countries there may be particular areas of cities where there are large Jewish communities with all the facilities needed for a halakhic life.

One of the major fears of Judaism is of younger members 'marrying-out' and effectively leaving the faith and the community. Also, it is often a struggle for teenagers and young people in the western world to adhere to the strict requirements of the faith when their colleagues and friends may be going out on a Friday night or encouraging them to eat with them away from their home. The family and the community offer support and strength but many may find it hard to resist the pull of some aspects of modern life.

Revision Topics

BELIEFS	REVISION NOTES
Nature of G-d	
Nature of human beings	
A Chosen People – the Covenant	
The Messiah	
Judgement	
PRACTICES	REVISION NOTES
Living according to the Torah	
Shabbat	
Yom Kippur	
Worship	

