

Course Companion for GCSE AQA (Short Course)

Paper 1 Option 4: Judaism: Beliefs and Teachings

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Teacher's Introduction

This resource has been designed to support the learning and teaching of AQA GCSE Religious Studies A, Paper 1 for Short Course. Jewish beliefs and teachings are covered, and questions and activities are included to test students' knowledge and ability, and to help them engage with the topics.

The information is comprehensive, and images help to illustrate concepts. Keywords and Bible quotes are included to help students to understand the material and to further their grasp of the subjects. A brief introduction to the course and answering exam questions is provided for students at the start, and answers and a mark scheme are included at the end.

This course companion can be used in full as an alternative or a complement to a textbook, as a class text or for independent learning or revision. Alternatively, teachers might use a section for a specific classroom activity or homework.

This specification covers a broad range, both in terms of time periods covered and different aspects of Jewish belief. This should both inform students and develop their thinking, enabling them to approach issues from different points of view. It should also help students to see the significant differences between Judaism and Christianity, enabling them to give accurate responses in exams.

We have sought a balance between explaining relevant concepts in sufficient detail without oversimplification, and not going beyond GCSE level and becoming too complicated. Throughout we have tried to present all views in a neutral and informative way.

Hopefully this resource will encourage students in their learning and help to prepare them for their exams. It should take the pressure away from teachers by providing the bulk of the content which they want to teach to their class.

Remember!

Always check the exam board's website for new information, including changes to the specification and sample assessment material.

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Introduction to the course and how to answer

This course aims to cover many aspects of Judaism and to assess your understanding. Be aware that Judaism is one of many different beliefs and traditions in the UK alongside Buddhism, Hinduism, Islam, Christianity and Sikhism.

The range of material covers several subject areas: what Jews believe, and why; and how religion is accounted for. There will be reference to the influence of various aspects of beliefs and teachings on Jews today; and different points of view from the past, reinforced with reference to the Tanakh (the Jewish scripture).

This course companion is designed to equip you with the information you need to gain the knowledge and ability to answer related questions. Not all the questions and answers are exam-style questions which should be answered in particular ways.

The exam board will ask you to give quick facts and statements, as well as asking you to 'explain' and 'evaluate' beliefs, opinions and practices.

When answering all questions it is important to try to use technical terms where possible, and to write well, using both a style that is easy to follow and correct spelling and grammar. More or less writing will be required, depending on the number of marks. Try to spend as little time as possible on the shorter questions to allow yourself more time for the longer ones.

You will get a 1-mark, 2-mark, 4-mark, 5-mark and 12-mark question in the exam. An extra 3 marks are given for spelling, punctuation and grammar on the 12-mark question. This also goes for the other religion you study.

Hopefully, this resource will be interesting and informative, and help you to achieve good results.

For the **1-mark question**, you will be given a multiple-choice question and you need to choose the right answer. Be careful you don't fall for trick answers!

For the **2-mark question**, you need to give two examples or facts. You do not need to elaborate on these, and do not waste time giving extra examples, as you can only get 2 marks.

The **4-mark question** differs between the sections on beliefs and teachings and on practices. In the section on beliefs and teachings you will be asked to 'explain' two ways in which a belief or teaching is carried out. In the section on practices you will be asked to 'explain' two contrasting views on practices. Here, you will lose marks if you do not explain. You need to give two different points, and, to get full marks, you must develop or justify each point with a quote or other evidence. So you can think of it as being 1 mark per point and each point. This should show that you understand information as well as being able to apply it. Each way or view and each justification as different as possible so that you get all possible marks.

The **5-mark question** also differs between the sections on beliefs and teachings and on practices. In the section on beliefs and teachings you will be asked to 'explain' two Jewish teachings and refer to sources. In the section on practices you will be asked to 'explain' two ways in which a practice is carried out, or two contrasting views, with reference to Jewish teaching (this can be a source or denominational teaching). This is similar to the 4-mark question, but as well as making two points and developing/justifying both, you must also refer to Jewish teachings as appropriate (for a total of 5 marks). Again, try to make sure your points are different and your justifications are different so that the person marking can give credit for every point/development you make.

The **12-mark question** is the longest, and there is a little more to remember. You will need to give arguments and justifications **for** and **against** the statement (so agreeing with it, and disagreeing with it, or a different point of view). Make sure you have good reasons for all the points you make and link them together. You need to come to a conclusion, picking the most convincing side of the argument (based on the arguments you have made) and explain why you think this is the case. You need to refer to Jewish teaching in your conclusion.

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Beliefs and Teachings

Keywords:

- ♦ **Tenakh:** the Jewish Bible, written in the Hebrew language and made up of the **Nevi'im** (writings of prophets) and **Ketuvim** (writings such as poetry, proverbs)
- ♦ **branch:** a particular group within a religion, e.g. Orthodox, Reform
- ♦ **theologian:** someone who studies religion and God
- ♦ **Traditional:** Jews who closely follow the teachings in the Tenakh and Talmud
- ♦ **Progressive:** Jews who consider changes in the world and society when interpreting the teachings
- ♦ **Sephardic:** Jews who trace their heritage back to Spain and Portugal towards the end of the Roman Empire
- ♦ **Masorti:** Hebrew for 'traditional'

A key part of any religion is its beliefs and teachings. These are particularly important for mainstream branches, as they directly underpin day-to-day practice. Different interpretations of the **Tenakh** and from **theologians** and philosophers who have asked difficult questions about religion. Individual Jews, and different **branches** of Judaism, have different beliefs, depending on how they interpret teachings and the teachings they receive.

In the UK today, Jewish communities can be broadly categorised as **Traditional** or **Progressive**. In these, there are several branches of belief and practice:

- **Orthodox:** The main branch of Traditional Judaism. In the UK, these Jews see themselves as 'strictly Orthodox' or 'central Orthodox'.
- **Reform:** One of the two main branches of Progressive Judaism
- **Liberal:** One of the two main branches of Progressive Judaism

There are also smaller numbers of **Sephardic** Jews in the UK, whose way of life is most similar to those of Orthodox Jews. Therefore, they would also be considered Orthodox Judaism. The **Masorti** community is growing in the UK. Describing themselves as 'traditional', their beliefs and practices could be considered progressive.



An inflatable menorah (candelabra) in Sydney. Chanukah is a Jewish festival that takes place in the winter, celebrating a Jewish miracle that took place in the second century BCE.

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Key Beliefs

The Nature of God – God as One, God as Creator and God as

Keywords:

- ♦ **monotheistic:** believing in one god
- ♦ **eternal:** without beginning or end, everlasting
- ♦ **Devarim:** the fifth book of the Torah, known as Deuteronomy in the Christian Bible
- ♦ **stewardship:** being in authority over Earth and looking after it
- ♦ **omnipotent:** all-powerful, having infinite power
- ♦ **Shabbat:** day of rest from all work, starting at sunset on a Friday evening
- ♦ **Beresheet:** the first book of the Torah, known as Genesis in the Christian Bible
- ♦ **Torah:** the first five books of the Bible, referred to by many Jews as the book of the Law
- ♦ **Talmud:** a combination of the written record of the oral law of Judaism according to the rabbis and written discussions about it
- ♦ **omniscient:** all-knowing
- ♦ **Rosh Hashanah:** a new year celebration seen as the beginning of a 10-day period of repentance for people according to their actions

God as One

Jews are taught that there is one god, so Judaism is a **monotheistic** religion. God has many attributes and can be described in different ways, God cannot be divided into other gods; God is one whole. According to Judaism, God exists outside space and time, with no beginning or end and is, therefore, **eternal**. This is shown by God's reply to Moses' question 'Who are you?' 'Ehyeh Asher Ehyeh'. In English this means 'I am who I am' or 'I will be what I will be', meaning God has been, and always will be, one and does not change. Jews should only worship God.



'Hear, O Israel: The Lord our god, the Lord is one!'
Devarim (Deuteronomy) 6:4, NKJV

God as Creator

To Jews, the complexity of Earth and the life upon it tells them that it was created. The book of Bereshit (Genesis) states that God created the world, and Jews today say that God created the whole universe. The creation story in the first chapter says that God created Earth in six days, and created everything in a specific order:

- Day 1: light, day and night
- Day 2: sky
- Day 3: land and plants
- Day 4: sun, moon and stars
- Day 5: sea creatures and birds
- Day 6: land animals and humans



A second story is in Bereshit 2, where a man is created by God from the dust of the ground and puts the man there to look after it. Humans have been created to be like God and responsible for the **stewardship** of the planet. Kibbutzim, small agricultural communities, were set up in the early twentieth century and many have joined environmental groups today.



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While many Orthodox Jews today say that these stories are literally true, they show God is **omnipotent** and is the reason for the existence of everything. Creator is a key Jewish belief, and this is shown each week when many Jews observe **Shabbat**, a weekly day of rest. God is said to have rested for a day after creation. It is traditional for Jews to spend a day not working themselves, worshipping God at home, reflecting upon the creation story.

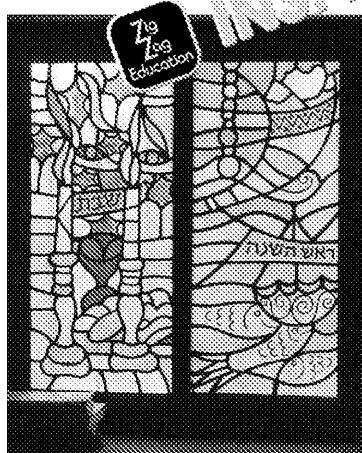
'Then God saw everything that He had made, and indeed it was very good.'
Bereshit (Genesis) 1:31, NKJV

God as Lawgiver and Judge

Jews also believe that God has given humans laws to follow so that creation can worship God, to give thanks for being created. These laws can be found in the Tanakh, the **Torah**. It is said that Moses was given the Torah by God; this is a text that helps Jews understand the Torah, giving them advice on how to act. The Ten Commandments (known by many Jews as the Ten Sayings or Ten Statements) are a very helpful when Jews are trying to live according to God's law in a rapidly changing world.

God is also said to judge humans according to how they have followed the laws. God is known to be just and fair, knowing everything about everyone past, present and future. **Rosh Hashanah** is a festival when Jews say God judges them for their deeds during the previous year. Jews are taught that God is just and merciful, so will always judge fairly. Many Jews say that, whatever someone does, they will be forgiven by God and God never abandons them.

'The Lord is merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and abounding in kindness.'
Tehillim (Psalms) 103:8, NKJV



A stained-glass window in a synagogue

Did you know?

The country Israel takes its name from Jacob wrestling with an angel, winning the fight. Yisrael. In English this means 'to struggle with God'. Yisrael is one name for the god of Judaism. God is known as Adonai (Lord), Elohim (god) and Yahweh. The Tetragrammaton is a name for God as Hashem (The Name) and is written in Hebrew. It is used in Jewish law and is said to be so powerful in Jewish tradition that it is not to be written or spoken. It is also reminds them of God's power and the covenant. It also reminds many of the Torah, which is the Jewish law.

Pause for thought:

Some Jews say that the absence of vowels in the written Torah enables them to read it in many different ways and apply the text to many different contexts. By inserting different vowels into the text, different meanings can be formed, revealing new meanings. This is said to bring a greater understanding of the text, but to what end? It might lead to disagreements over how to live and worship?

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Quick Questions

1. Which of the following is used to describe God as a judge?
a) Merciful b) Eternal c) Creator
2. Give two examples of how God is said to be revealed in Judaism.

Now Try This...

3. Explain two ways in which the nature of God as Creator influences Jewish beliefs. Refer to scripture or other sources of authority.



Important to note...

The exam may ask you for the 'nature' of various things. This means what something is and what it is like, e.g. the Jewish god is one being, is loving and powerful – these are all aspects of its nature.



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The Divine Presence – Shekhinah

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Keywords:

- ♦ **transcendent:** existing beyond human understanding, outside space and time
- ♦ **immanence:** the state of being immanent; present in the world
- ♦ **Shekhinah:** God's presence on Earth
- ♦ **tabernacle:** a tent used for worship
- ♦ **Israelites:** the ancient tribes who Jewish people descended from
- ♦ **Promised Land:** Canaan which today is Israel, Jordan and the south of Syria
- ♦ **minyan:** a group of ten Jewish adults, which is needed for certain services and statements. In Orthodox Judaism this group must be all male, whereas Reform and Conservative Judaism can include women in a minyan.
- ♦ **Shemot:** The second book of the Torah, known as Exodus in the Christian Bible
- ♦ **Hebrew:** (Biblical and Modern): the language the Jewish Bible was written in and spoken in of Israel
- ♦ **Kabbala:** A Jewish school of thought that focuses on personal religious experience and connection with God

Even though God is said to be **transcendent** and unknowable, God is also said to directly affect humans and the world, showing **immanence**. God's presence is known as the **Shekhinah** and is said to be sensed when Jews feel connected to God through prayer or any other activity where they are fully acting in line with God's laws and commands. For example, many Jews say that the Shekhinah is present when they light candles as part of their Shabbat. The Shekhinah is also to be found in significant places and at certain times, such as the **tabernacle** used by the **Israelites** when they were searching for the **Promised Land**, and when a **minyan** gathered.



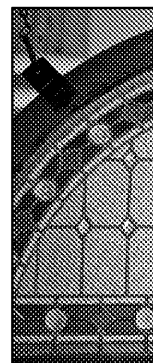
How the Israelites

'Then the cloud covered the tabernacle [tent] of meeting, and the glory of the LORD was seen by all the Israelites. Shemot (Exodus) 40:34, NKJV

Did you know?

The **Hebrew** root word for shekhinah, sakan or shachan, means to inhabit. For many Jews the Shekhinah is the idea of God literally resting or settling upon Earth. It is a feminine Hebrew word and many Jews, particularly those who follow **Kabbala**, see it as representing God's feminine qualities.

A belief in the Shekhinah can help many Jews feel connected to God in times of personal struggle. Recognising some of God's attributes as male and others as female helps Jews relate to a god who is said to be neither male nor female, acting both within the world and outside the world.



A Magen David

Quick Question

4. Give two Jewish beliefs about the Shekhinah.

(2 marks)



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Beliefs about Life after Death

Keywords:

- ♦ **eschatology:** the study of the end of time or end times
- ♦ **Olam Ha-Ba:** 'the World to Come'
- ♦ **Gan Eden:** the Garden of Eden
- ♦ **Sheol:** an underworld to which souls go after death
- ♦ **rabbi:** a Hebrew word for 'teacher'
- ♦ **righteous:** doing right, correctly, and follow God's laws correctly
- ♦ **Gehinnom:** also spelled **gehenna** or **Genhenna**, a place where the souls of bad people go after death
- ♦ **annihilation:** ceasing to exist, an act of God
- ♦ **iniquity:** a wrong or unfair action; sin
- ♦ **atonement:** being forgiven for sins and/or making up for them
- ♦ **resurrection:** coming back to life, when the soul comes back into the body
- ♦ **Maimonides:** a Jewish philosopher from Spain who lived in the twelfth century
- ♦ **Mishnah:** the written record of the oral law of Judaism accompanying the Torah
- ♦ **Techiyat HaMetim:** resurrection of the dead

According to Judaism, everyone has a soul that separates from the body when they die. In the past there was much discussion about what happens to the soul after death. Some religions focus on the afterlife or **eschatology**. Indeed, some Reform Jews believe in an afterlife, saying the dead live on in their loved one's memories of them and when they were alive. For most Jews now, what matters is how life is lived. The main source of Jewish law to know is in the Tanakh and the Torah, which sets out what they must do to live a good Jewish life, what will happen in the afterlife, or **Olam Ha-Ba**.

Nevertheless, very little is said about the afterlife in them, writings from the Bible offer a range of views. The Bible mentions **Sheol**, an underworld where the dead exist in silence for eternity, regardless of how good their lives have been. Some Jews believe in **Olam Ha-Ba** as **Gan Eden** and vice versa, suggesting the World to Come is where God is present.

'As the cloud disappears and vanishes away, so he who goes down to the grave will be forgotten.
Iyyobh (Job) 7:9, NKJV

Judgement

During Roman times, some **rabbis** put forward the idea that this life (and the next) is a preparation for **Olam Ha-Ba**, where the **righteous** are rewarded.

It is said by some Jews that the souls of the unrighteous go to **Gehinnom**, where they are purified before entering **Olam Ha-Ba**. Others say that some souls are so unrighteous that they are **annihilated**, or that those souls go off forever as a punishment from God.

At the end of the world, the Lord comes out of His place to punish the inhabitants of the earth for all their iniquities.
Yesha'yahu (Isaiah) 26:21, NKJV

For many Jews, God's judgement takes place every year at Yom Kippur. The details of the Day of Atonement are described in detail later in this course companion.

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Resurrection

As with the concept of judgement, there are different ideas about who will happen and whether it will happen at all.

Maimonides held the view that resurrection was a core Jewish belief, and anyone who does not believe in it will not see the World to Come.

The Bible also mentions resurrection, and due to these sources of authority Orthodox Jews to believe in resurrection. **Teshiyat HaMetim**. Many talk be buried intact so that the whole person can be resurrected. This means cremation and organ donation. However, the idea of a resurrection is not Judaism. For many of these Jews, discussions about judgement or resurrection working out to live well.

'Your dead shall live; together with my dead body they shall arise. Awake and sit up.
And the earth shall cast out the dead.'
Yesha'yahu (Isaiah) 26:19, NKJV

Did you know?

A belief in reincarnation became popular in mystical Judaism during the Middle Ages. Kabbalah and Hasidic Judaism (what many would call one of the groups within Orthodox Judaism) believe that souls are punished in next lives, sometimes by souls returning in animals, and it has been said that some figures were the reincarnations of significant predecessors.

Quick Questions

5. Which of the following is the place given by Jews to 'the World to Come'?
 - a) Sheol
 - b) Olam Ha-Ba
 - c) Heaven
6. Give three Jewish beliefs about judgement.

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- ◆ **The Messiah (Mashiach):** 'Anointed One', a reference to the ancient custom of anointing the head of a new king or queen to show they have been chosen by God
- ◆ **Messianic Age:** a time of peace and righteousness after the Messiah's arrival
- ◆ **The Temple:** the Second Temple in Jerusalem, destroyed by the Romans after 70 CE. The remaining part of the Temple is the Temple's western or 'Wailing' wall.
- ◆ **tikkun olam:** healing the world by following God's laws

Messianic Age. The Messiah is described by some as:

- Messianic Jews are those who believe that Yeshua (Jesus)

'At that time Jerusalem shall be called The Throne of the Lord, and all the nations shall come before the Lord, to Jerusalem. No more shall they follow the dictates of their own hearts.' (Jeremiah) 3:17, NKJV

It is said in orthodox Judaism that the dead will be resurrected when the Messiah comes by God. This leads some Jews to say that the Messianic Age and Olam Ha

However, many Progressive Jews see the Messianic Age as a time brought about by the actions of the Jewish people as a whole rather than an individual. They say that by taking collective responsibility for the world, it can be repaired morally and physically; this is **tikkun olam**. This concept is seen in an aspirational way and fits in with many Jews' idea that living according to the commandments in this life should be their focus. The Key Moral Principles section provides examples of how many Jews work towards fulfilling this aspiration.

7. Give **two** views of the Messianic Age in Judaism.

8. 'Jews don't need a messiah to be a messiah.'
Evaluate this statement.

Argue for and against this statement. You must refer to Jewish teaching which follows from your argument.



The Covenant and the Mitz

The Promised Land and the Covenant with Abraham

Keywords:

- ♦ **covenant:** a binding agreement or contract
- ♦ **Canaan: The Promised Land**, which today covers Israel, Lebanon, parts of
- ♦ **Abraham:** a Hebrew name meaning 'father of many'
- ♦ **Hebrew:** a word of uncertain origin, but possibly meaning 'refugees' or 'refugees'
- ♦ **patriarch:** a man who is the head of a family, country or tribe
- ♦ **Haran:** a place in what is now Turkey

Jews trace their lineage back to Abram, who is often described as a **patriarch**. He taught that Abram was a righteous follower of the one true god, at a time when many gods were worshipped. The Bible says God told Abram to leave his home in Haran and to protect and favour him and his people. The idea of a 'Promised Land' for

'Get out of your country, from your family, and from your father's house and go to the land I will show you. I will make of thee a great nation, I will bless you, and make your name great; and you shall be blessed. I will bless those that bless you, and I will curse him who curses you; and all shall be blessed.'

Bereshit (Genesis) 12:1-3, NKIV

Abram obeyed God's instruction, taking his wife, Sarai, his nephew and the alongside Abram's family in Haran. This is the first **covenant** between God to see Israel as their true home. God also gave the first Jewish law and would be at the time of Moses.

Unfortunately, Abram and the others were treated badly by the Canaanites. However, it is said that sometime after settling in Canaan, God made another covenant with Abram in return for his devotion, promising Abram that he would rule over Canaan and that Sarah would have a child despite not being able to conceive naturally. God also said that Abram would have many descendants. From that point on, Abram would be called **Abraham** and all **Hebrew** males would be circumcised so that they would never forget to follow God's instructions in return for all God would give Abraham and the generations to come.



God's promise

To Jews, Abraham is an example of faithfulness to God and how that story also shows many Jews that they should trust that God has a plan for them, eternal and in so many ways unknowable, they should focus on day-to-day what that plan might be.

Quick Questions

9. Which of the following is the name for God's agreements with Abraham?
a) patriarchs b) tikkun olam c) Sheol
10. Explain two ways in which Abraham influences Jews today.

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The Covenant at Sinai and Its Importance

Keywords:

- ♦ **prophet:** a messenger of God
- ♦ **pharaoh:** king
- ♦ **Midian:** an area in what is now Saudi Arabia
- ♦ **oppression:** repeated harsh and unfair treatment of a person or group
- ♦ **Israelites:** the ancestors of the Jews
- ♦ **Pesach:** Passover
- ♦ **mitzvot:** the commandments of God for Jews; the singular is mitzvah
- ♦ **Aseret D'vayim:** Ten Sayings
- ♦ **Mishnah:** the written version of the Oral Law
- ♦ **covet:** be jealous of
- ♦ **Sefer Hamitzvot:** Book of the Commandments

Moses

Moses is considered by Jews to be the greatest of God's **prophets**. It is said that after Abraham, around 3,500 years ago, the Hebrews were living in Egypt when it was succeeded by a pharaoh who, unlike his predecessor, did not have a policy of tolerance towards the Hebrews. This pharaoh became concerned with the growth of the Hebrew population, a threat, finally ordering that all baby Hebrew boys should be killed by being thrown into the Nile. Of this, Moses' mother hid him on the riverbank.

Did you know?

The Hebrews became known as Israelites as they looked to make their own nation which would become known as Israel. Although they were descended from Abraham's grandson Yisrael/Israel ('to struggle with God') and is referred to as Israel in the Bible. Perhaps this suggests that God and his Chosen People were working together instead of struggling. Jacob and his sons are said to have done this.

Moses was rescued by the pharaoh's daughter and eventually raised by her. There are several significant events in Moses' life:

- Moses finds an Egyptian beating a Hebrew and kills the Egyptian
- The pharaoh finds out what Moses has done and tries to kill Moses, so he flees to Midian
- Moses settles in **Midian**, where one day God speaks to him from a burning bush and he has been chosen to take the Hebrews from Egypt to the land promised to Abraham. God has seen the **oppression** of the Hebrews and wants to fulfil God's promise with Abraham.
- Despite initially feeling unable to accept God's command, Moses returns to Egypt and persuade the pharaoh to let the Hebrews go
- God works through Moses to bring plagues upon the Egyptians, but they are still not allowed to leave
- The Hebrews are finally allowed to leave after the tenth plague; God kills the firstborn of Egypt, sparing the Israelites
- Pharaoh changes his mind, sending his army to pursue the Israelites and all his men, the Bible says God drew the Red Sea apart so that the Israelites could escape. The escape from Egypt is marked every year during the festival of Pesach.

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Sinai

To many Jews, the most significant event in Moses' life is said to be receiving the Ten Commandments from God upon Mount Sinai. In return for following these laws, God promised to protect and provide for the Jewish people.

'Now therefore, if you will indeed obey My voice and keep My covenant, then you shall be My special treasure, a holy nation, My own possession, above all people...'
Shemot (Exodus) 19:5, NKJV

Did you know?

When Jews are called 'God's chosen people', it's not meant as a statement of superiority. Jews say that all humanity is God's creation. Additionally, they have been promised protection and blessings by the covenants God made with Abraham and Moses, which mean that they must follow God's promises. Some Jews say they're no more special than anyone else, they're just different.

Israelites. It is this special relationship between God and the Jews that is referred to as 'the Covenant'. The Jews are 'God's chosen people'.

The mitzvot set out what God expects Jews to do throughout their lives in return for the special relationship. The importance of this covenant is often referred to as 'the Covenant'. Moses was allowed close enough to God to receive the mitzvot on Mount Sinai, and they were written on two stone tablets. In the Torah they are called the **Aseret ha-D'varim** and the Ten Commandments.

Moses' status is such that the Torah is often referred to as the Books of Moses. Judaism teaches that the Oral Torah, which is now in the form of the **Mishnah**, was given to Moses by God. Moses is regarded by many as the first and greatest rabbi. His unwavering and lifelong faith and trust in God, has inspired many.



Did you know?
The Bible says that after Moses returned back from receiving the Ten Commandments, he found the people worshipping a golden calf. So angry he smashed the tablets. The tablets were made of gold and were transported in the Ark of the Covenant.

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The Ten Commandments

Mitzvot between humans and God

'I am the Lord your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the land of slavery.
You shall have no other gods before Me. ...
You shall not take the name of the Lord your God in vain; for the Lord will not hold him guiltless who takes his name in vain.
Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy.'

Mitzvot between humans and humans

'Honour your father and your mother, that your days may be long upon the land which the Lord your God is giving you.
You shall not murder.
You shall not commit adultery.
You shall not steal.
You shall not bear false witness against your neighbour.
You shall not covet your neighbour's house; you shall not covet your neighbour's wife, nor his servant, nor his ox, nor his donkey, nor any thing that is your neighbour's.'

Shemot (Exodus) 20:1-17 NKJV

Maimonides provided what is regarded by many Jews as a definitive list of **613 mitzvot**. The **613 mitzvot** are divided into positives (mitzvot *ta'aseh*; you *shall*) and negatives (mitzvot *ta'aseh*; you *shall not*). Therefore, the **613 mitzvot** are a guide to how to live. It is believed that an understanding of this and how the mitzvot relate to each other can help Jews to live harmoniously and ensure they live according to God's intentions for the Jewish people.

'So the Lord said to Moses, "I will also do this thing for you, as you have spoken; for you shall say to the Israelites, 'I have known you by name.'" (Exodus 33:17, NKJV)

Pause for thought:

The Bible says Moses didn't get to set foot in the Promised Land. God had said Moses would enter the land if he followed an instruction, so Moses was told he wouldn't enter Canaan. For many Jews, Moses is seen as a faithful to God, and God is said to be loving and merciful. How could this story be explained?

Quick Questions

11. Give **two** mitzvot God revealed to Moses.
12. Explain **two** views about Moses. Refer to scripture or other sources of Jewish authority.

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Key Moral Principles

Keywords:

- ♦ **justice:** fairness in the way people are dealt with
- ♦ **tikkun olam:** 'world repair'; healing the world by following God's laws
- ♦ **stewardship:** being in the position of looking after, managing or caring for
- ♦ **Tu B'Shvat:** the 15th day of Shevat (the 11th month of the Jewish year, in Jan)
- ♦ **Tzedakah:** Hebrew for 'justice' or 'righteousness', normally in the form of giving
- ♦ **pushke:** Yiddish, from 'push' or 'tin can'
- ♦ **NGOs:** non-governmental organisations, charities that work independently of government
- ♦ **gemilut chesed:** reciprocal acts of love and kindness (both God's and human)
- ♦ **avodah:** worship, work and service
- ♦ **Pikuach Nefesh:** saving a life

As recorded in the Torah, the mitzvot are extensive; they cover everything from the punishment of getting rid of mildew on clothes! Although such a large amount of detail makes life complicated, this amount of detail makes Jews' obligations clear and their moral principles:

Justice

Many mitzvot relate to everyday tasks and situations in a way that encourages Jews to think about others and consider the impact of their actions on others. Consequently, justice is a central theme in Judaism, as can be seen in beliefs about a Messiah. The quote below is just one of many in the Torah that makes Jews think about consequences in a way that should bring equality.

'If a man steals an ox or a donkey, and slaughters it or sells it, he shall restore five oxen for an ox and four sheep for a donkey.'

Shemot (Exodus) 22:1, NKJV

Did you know?

René Cassin is a Jewish human rights organisation based in the UK. It's now headed by a Jewish woman. René Cassin was one of the writers of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, who won the Nobel Peace Prize. The charity has campaigned against activities such as human trafficking, hate speech and antisemitism.

Healing the world

Jews say they have been commanded by God to set an example not only for other Jews but for all of humanity. **Tikkun olam** does not just mean healing the world through justice and righteousness; the healing of the world and all of Earth and its inhabitants is also part of this.

'For You have made him a little lower than the angels, and You have crowned him with glory and honour. You have made him to have dominion over the works of Your hands; You have put all things under his feet.'

Tehillim (Psalms) 8:5-6 NKJV

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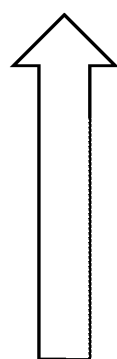
Many Jews celebrate a new year for trees at the festival of Tu B'Shvat, during January. They recall the life-giving importance of trees in the Torah and their own connection to what they see as a created environment by planting trees at this time.

Tu B'Shvat reminds Jews that, according to the Torah, they are in charge of the world and are responsible for its upkeep; where it is damaged it should be mended – it is not just there to be used. Humans should care for Earth and trees and it will suffer.

Charity

Tzedakah (charitable giving) can be seen as a form of tikkun olam, helping to ensure that all are treated fairly. As well as requiring Jews to be charitable in general, Judaism teaches that 10% of everyone's income is to be given to charity. Many Jewish homes have a tzedakah box (or 'pushke') for collecting charitable donations.

Maimonides' ladder of charity sets out different levels of giving:



- 1) Forming a business partnership with a poor person
- 2) Where the donor and the recipient don't know who each is
- 3) Where the donor knows who the recipient is
- 4) Where the recipient knows who the donor is
- 5) Where the donor and recipient know each other but the donor is not being asked
- 6) Where the donor is asked to give
- 7) Where the donor is asked and is happy to give
- 8) Where the donor is asked and gives resentfully

However, charity is not limited to giving money. Helping fellow humans in fulfilling Abraham's covenant to set an example to the world, is common in Judaism. One of the most well-known Jewish charities is Tzedek, which works in partnership with NGOs in Africa and South Asia to overcome extreme poverty. Tzedek's work includes establishing partnerships between NGOs and local people, as well as helping locals develop organisations that they can rely less on foreign groups for help.

Kindness to others

It could be suggested that, as the principles in this section are obligations, Jews follow them just because they're good things to do in themselves. However, Jews don't do good things selflessly. On the other hand, **gemilut hasadim** (acts of kindness) goes beyond actions. Even though it is said that God rewards good deeds, the idea is to be fair, to heal the world and to give money to charity encourage compassion. Many Jews volunteer in their communities, for example. It is said that these actions help to connect one another and, from many Jews' points of view, connect with God.



'The world rests upon three things, Torah, avodah [worship, work and service] and gemilut hasadim.
The Talmud

'He has shown you, O man, what is good; and what does the Lord require of you but to do justice, love kindness, and walk humbly with your God?'
Mikhah 6:8 NKJV

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Another way this teaching has influenced Jews is that many campaign for... that includes atrocities committed in the Second World War and being ens...

'Also you shall not oppress a stranger, for you know the heart of a stranger, because you were strangers in the land of Egypt.' Shemot (Exodus) 23:9, NKJV



A protest against the ill-treatment of refugees and asylum seekers



People at a stall at the...

Quick Questions

13. Which of the following is *not* an example of stewardship in Judaism?

- a) P'... t... b) Kibbutzim c) Pushke d) ...

14. Explain two ways in which mitzvot influence Jews today.

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The importance of the Sanctity of Human Life

Keywords:

- ♦ **Pikuach Nefesh:** saving a life
- ♦ **Shulhan Arukh:** 'set table', a sixteenth-century Jewish code of law

'G-d created man in His own image...'
Bereshit (Genesis) 1:27, NKJV

Understanding: Jews think that human life is precious, special and holy; human Creation and following the mitzvot enables Jews to live well.

Did you know?

At many celebrations and festivals, the toast 'L'Chaim!' is often heard. Properly 'la himel', it means, 'To Life!'

In line with this, it is accepted by most Jews that, if the purpose of Jewish law is to live a good life, then those rules aren't as important as human life itself.

Pikuach Nefesh. Due to this, it is acceptable to break all but three mitzvot (adultery) in order to save a life. For example, Jewish law says no work may be done on Shabbat, but if doctors or nurses are called upon to save lives on Shabbat, it can be done. In fact, it is so far as to state that to save one life is the same as saving the world.

'It is a religious precept to keep the Sabbath for any person afflicted with danger, and a man who is zealous is praiseworthy while he who asks questions is not.'
The Shulhan Arukh

While this seems reasonable, there are arguments over how far Pikuach Nefesh can go. For example, many people in the UK are in favour of their organs being used to save lives. This varies in Judaism. While many Jews feel that the body should be buried intact, organ donation for saving lives is considered acceptable by most Jews. However, many rabbis feel that this isn't the same as saving a life, even if it has a benefit in the long term. Autopsies are against Jewish law, but an autopsy that provides information needed to save another life is acceptable.

Quick Question

15. Explain **two** Jewish teachings about human life. Refer to scripture or other Jewish authority.

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The Relationship between Free Will and the Mitzvot

Keywords:

- ♦ **free will:** the state of being able to make decisions independently of others
- ♦ **yetzer ha-tov:** 'good plan'
- ♦ **yetzer ha-ra:** 'evil plan'

Despite the presence of so many commandments in the Torah, there is such freedom in Judaism. Here are some examples:

- The Bible says 'humans are like God, and having the capacity to choose being good or bad!'
- Humans are born with the inclination to do good (**yetzer hatov**) and the inclination to do bad (**yetzer hara**), and it is believed that as they get older the yetzer hatov has more influence on Jews' behaviour
- The festival of Yom Kippur comes after a period of 10 days where Jews atone for their sins
- Reform Judaism generally teaches that the Torah needs to be interpreted in the context of today's world
- Liberal Judaism generally teaches that the divinely inspired Bible was written for its time – this must be taken into account when using the Bible
- Orthodox Judaism generally teaches that the Bible is the word of God and should not be reinterpreted; it has already been explained in the Talmud. However, the rabbis do apply it to modern times.

So, mitzvot *are* commands but people are free to choose whether to follow them. Humans have the freedom to choose whether to follow God through their actions.

Pause for thought:

There's a conflict between being in immediate danger and risking health. When is it acceptable to risk health? If the aims of the mitzvot are to remain intact? How should Pikuach Nefesh be applied? Should war ever be considered as a way of resolving a dispute between countries?

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Mitzvot between Man and God and Mitzvot between M

The Ten Commandments focus on humanity's relationship with God (the first six commandments) and the way humans treat each other (the next six commandments). As with the other 603 mitzvot deal with the way people should worship God and the way

Some examples of mitzvot between people are how to compensate someone for damage, how to treat slaves and servants, protecting people from harm and how to use farmland.

Some examples of mitzvot between people and God are how to perform a sacrifice, how to eat kosher and to not work on Shabbat.

Even though each mitzvah is important, many Jews say that if there is a clash between mitzvot relating to humans' relationships with each other should be carried out before mitzvot relating to God. Orthodox Jews have said that mitzvot between people are in a way more important than mitzvot between people and God. Mitzvot concerning God alone don't relate to humans. Mitzvot between people come first. This will please God as it focuses on bringing happiness to the world God has created.

Quick Questions

16. Which of the following is an example of breaking a mitzvah between God and humans?

- a) Worshipping an idol b) Murder c) Stealing

17. Give two Jewish beliefs about mitzvot.

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Summary for Beliefs and Teachings

Key Beliefs

- ♦ The Jewish god is believed to be **omnipotent** (all-powerful), loving, and is described as a **lawgiver and judge**, the **creator** of the universe and 'creator' of the Jewish people.
- ♦ Judaism says that God's presence on Earth, the **Shekhinah**, can be experienced in different places and at different times.
- ♦ Most Jews are more concerned with how to live than about what happens after death. There is a range of views concerning the afterlife, or **Olam Ha-Ba**. Early Jewish belief was in **Sheol**, a place where all souls go upon death. Later, the idea of **Heaven** gained popularity. Many Jews feel that they are judged by God after death. Some Jews believe that God will **resurrect** people's physical bodies at the end of time.
- ♦ Some Jews say that God will resurrect the dead and judge the souls of the living when the **Messiah** (Mashiach) comes. To some Jews the Messiah will be a great leader, but to others the Messianic Age will be a time when Jews as a group bring positive change to the world to God.

The Covenant and the Mitzvot

- ♦ Abraham is thought of as one of the patriarchs of Judaism. It is said that God made a covenant with Abraham and settle in Canaan in return for God's favour and protection. This is the **Covenant of Abraham**. When reaching Canaan, God made another covenant with Abraham, telling him that his descendants would inherit the land for many generations. This was in return for Abraham's faith and devotion to God.
- ♦ **Moses** is said to have led the Hebrews out of slavery in Egypt. They believed that God had promised them this time, as they were searching for Canaan, the Promised Land, which is Israel today. The Bible says that Moses made a covenant with God when he came down from Mount Sinai. The first 10 of the 613 mitzvot are known as the **Ten Commandments**. The remaining 603 mitzvot have been recorded in the Torah, the first five books of the Bible.
- ♦ The mitzvot instruct Jews in their everyday lives and emphasise ways of living that encourage **holiness**, that bring the **healing of the world** and that encourage Jews to be good to each other.
- ♦ In Judaism, humans are the beings that most resemble God, and they are given the responsibility to rule over Earth. Human life is sacred, to the extent that most mitzvot require one to save a life. This is **Pikuach Nefesh**.
- ♦ Many Orthodox Jews say that humans have free will so that we may choose to do good and there is no need to adapt God's laws to new situations. However, many Jews believe that the Torah sometimes needs to be **reinterpreted**, which is more evidence of God's love for his religion. Many Jews say we are born with **inclinations** to be bad and good, and we have free will to decide to do good.
- ♦ Mitzvot can be divided into dos and don'ts. They can also be divided into mitzvot between **humans and humans**, and mitzvot between **humans and God**. Even though all are commandments, some Jews say that the mitzvot between humans take precedence over those between humans and God because following them will not only help humans but will also please God. Carrying out the other mitzvot will please God but not help other humans.

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Answers

Beliefs and Teachings

Question number	Answer mark scheme
1	a) Merciful
2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> through Earth and the universe through written sacred texts, e.g. the Torah by writing God as G-d by inserting different vowels when reciting the Torah <p>Give 1 mark for each correct point, up to a maximum of 2 marks. 1 mark can be credited.</p>
3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Many Jews join environmental groups to help protect what they believe is God's creation Kibbutzim were set up in the early twentieth century and are still in existence Many Jews celebrate Shabbat, partly in order to remember the creation of the world surrounding the six days of creation and the day when God is believed to have rested <p>Other relevant points may be credited. 1 mark for a basic, relevant point. 2 marks for a detailed, relevant and accurate explanation. 1 mark for a source of authority.</p>
4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Shekhinah represents God's feminine qualities The Shekhinah signifies God's presence The Shekhinah is present at Shabbat The Shekhinah is a reminder of God's protection The Shekhinah is invoked when someone feels a strong connection to God <p>Give 1 mark for each correct point, up to a maximum of 2 marks. 1 mark can be credited.</p>
5	Olam Ha-Ba
6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> God judges everyone The righteous, judged favourably, enter Olam Ha-Ba The unrighteous enter Gehinnom/Gehenna and are purified for the next life The wicked are annihilated The wicked suffer for eternity Many Jews say God judges them every year at Yom Kippur <p>Give 1 mark for each correct point, up to a maximum of 2 marks. 1 mark can be credited.</p>
7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There will be peace and prosperity in the world Exiled Jews will return to Israel The dead will be resurrected It is a goal for Jewish society to aspire to Humanity will reach its full potential It will be a time of justice, brought about by people coming to God <p>Give 1 mark for each correct point, up to a maximum of 2 marks. 1 mark can be credited.</p>

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Question number	Answer / mark scheme
8	<p>A thoroughly argued response, showing evaluation and judgement, reasoning show knowledge and understanding of appropriate subject content. There must be appropriate references to Judaism. 10–12 marks</p> <p>Evaluation of different views. Lines of reasoning show knowledge and understanding of appropriate subject content. There must be appropriate references to Judaism. Evaluation of one view. Lines of reasoning show knowledge and understanding of appropriate subject content. A knowledge of more than one point of view. 4–6 marks</p> <p>One view with supporting reasons. 1–3 marks</p> <p>Points and justification for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> In Bereshit/Genesis, God gives humans free will and the intelligence to solve the world's problems The Torah gives clear instructions for living peacefully and well; humanity just needs to act upon them correctly By following the mitzvot, Jews will get their reward from God at some point anyway <p>Points and justification for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Despite having been persecuted, Jews need help Prophets have come; this was a clear message Non-Jews need to follow the Torah, so the message is clear <p>All relevant points must be credited</p>
9	d) covenants
10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Abraham set an example to be loyal and faithful to God Abraham's story encourages many to think that God cares A sense of nationhood arose out of Abraham settling in the Promised Land Judaism is monotheistic Many Jews see themselves as God's 'chosen people' <p>Other relevant points may be credited. For each way, 1 mark for a basic, relevant and accurate influence, 2 marks for a detailed, relevant and accurate influence.</p>
11	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Ten Commandments: God is Lord; only worship God; don't take the Sabbath holy; honour your parents, don't murder, don't lie, don't steal, don't be jealous <p>Give 1 mark for each correct point, up to a maximum of 2 marks. All relevant points may be credited.</p>
12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Moses was special to God as Moses was allowed in God's presence Moses is the founder of Judaism Moses was honoured, as it says in Shemot/Exodus that Moses was the one who spoke to God Moses is central as he passed on the mitzvot to the Jews and the books of the Torah are called the 'books of Moses' <p>Other relevant points may be credited. 1 mark for a basic, relevant and accurate influence, 2 marks for a detailed, relevant and accurate influence. 1 mark for a source of authority.</p>
13	c) Pushke
14	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Many Jews join environmental groups Many Jews campaign for human rights Many Jews celebrate Tu B'Shvat and plant trees Many Jews give to charity (tzedakah) Mitzvot encourage an attitude of gemilut hasadim (loving kindness) Orthodox Jews follow mitzvot closely, observing many rituals <p>Other relevant points may be credited. For each way, 1 mark for a basic, relevant and accurate influence, 2 marks for a detailed, relevant and accurate influence.</p>

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Question number	Answer / mark scheme
15	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bereshit/Genesis says life is God-given, so it is sacred (precious, special) Human life is a gift from God The concept of Pikuach Nefesh says saving a life is the only work that overrides Shabbat The Talmud states that saving a life is 'like saving the world' <p>Other relevant points may be credited. 1 mark for a basic, relevant and accurate answer. 2 marks for a detailed, relevant and accurate explanation. 1 mark for the relevance of a source cited in the answer.</p>
16	a)  ipping an idol
17	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mitzvot are God's commands, and must be applied The ways mitzvot are applied are open to different interpretations with the help of rabbis Mitzvot came directly from God to Moses Mitzvot between humans and other humans take priority over mitzvot between humans and God <p>Give 1 mark for each correct point, up to a maximum of 2 marks. Other relevant points may be credited.</p>

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