

Public acts of worship



In Judaism public worship: creates a **sense of community**, allows **participation in prayers** which can only be said in a congregation; **adds more merit to prayers**; **gives order and purpose** to religious life.

On **Shabbat** the **Sefer Torah** is taken out of the **Ark** and read from the **Bimah** with a sermon from the **rabbi**. Synagogues have special services for festivals especially *Rosh Hashanah*, *Yom Kippur* and *Simchat Torah*.

In **Orthodox** synagogues men and women sit separately. In **Liberal** synagogues they sit together and the rabbi may be a woman.

Synagogue worship is important to the **community** because: 1) to worship G-d with heart and soul requires worship in community with other Jews 2) it allows Jews to celebrate **Shabbat** properly 3) it allows the community to share in festivals and family celebrations.

Synagogue worship is important to the **individual** because: 1) it creates a sense of belonging 2) it allows people to reflect on the meaning of life 3) sermons from the **rabbi** are an opportunity to learn more about the Jewish life.

The Tenakh and Talmud

The **TeNaKh** is the Jewish scriptures made up of the **Torah** (The 5 books of Moses containing the 613 *Mitzvot*), **Nevi'im** (history and prophets) and **Ketuvim** (writings including history, philosophy, poetry and prophecy)

The **Tenakh** is important because; the **Psalms are a part of daily prayer**; the **Torah** and **Nevi'im** are part of synagogue worship; parts of the **Ketuvim** are used on festivals; studying the scriptures helps Jews understand and deepen their relationship with G-d.

Judaism teaches that when G-d gave Moses the **Torah**, he also gave him the **oral Torah** explaining how to keep the laws. Together they make up the **Halakhah**. This was written down as the **Mishneh**. This, together with the rabbis discussion of the laws, is written down as the **Talmud**.

The **Talmud** is important because it 1) explains the meaning of the *mitzvot* 2) explains how they should be kept 3) is the basis of the **Halakhah** (the foundation for Orthodox Jewish life today).

The *Mitzvot* contains many **food laws about what is kosher** (fit to eat) e.g. what can be eaten, how animals should be slaughtered, how some foods should be prepared.



Liberal Jews are less strict in keeping the food laws.

Prayer



Prayer is communication with G-d and can be either formal or informal. The formal prayers are found in the **Siddur** (prayer book). **Orthodox Jews say them in Hebrew**.

The **purpose of prayer for Jews** is: 1) to build a relationship with G-d 2) to serve G-d with their heart 3) to speak directly to G-d who hears and answers prayers.

Much of Jewish worship and prayer is centred on the home. Jews thank G-d for the new day each morning and end the day by praising G-d and saying the **Shema**. *Mezuzahs* on doorposts are a constant reminder of G-d's presence and encourage Jews to praise G-d. **Jews pray before and after eating food.**

Jews pray formally 3 times a day: **Sichrat** (morning prayer); **Minchah** (afternoon prayer); **Arvit** (evening prayer). The prayers said are set out in the **Siddur** and include the **Shema** and **Amidah**, plus readings from the **Torah** and **Nevi'im** (prophets). These prayers can be said in the synagogue or at home. **Orthodox Jews** wear a **tallit** (prayer shawl) and **tefillin** when saying morning prayer. **Liberal Jews** see this as optional.

Formal prayers help Jews focus on others, be a part of Jewish history, create a sense of community and give order to religious life. **Informal prayers** allow: personal communication with G-d, personal expression of thoughts and feelings, a chance to ask for G-d's help.

Shema and Amidah

The **Shema** is the **basic prayer of Judaism** emphasising: the oneness of G-d, the need to love G-d, the Covenant with G-d, the need to keep and teach the *Mitzvot* to children, the need to pray with **tefillin** and **tallit**, the need for **mezuzahs**.

The **Shema** is said **3 times a day**. It is remembered as Jews pass *mezuzahs* as they go from room to room. The first line is said whenever a **Torah** scroll is taken out of the **Ark** in the Synagogue.

The **Amidah** ('standing prayer') contains 19 blessings which praise G-d; request forgiveness; ask for healing of the sick; food for the world; the coming of the *Messiah*; peace; goodness; blessings; kindness; compassion.

The **Amidah** is said facing Jerusalem. It is said every day with slight variations for **Shabbat** (the Sabbath) and Festivals.

The **Amidah** is important because it fulfils the requirements for prayer set out by the great rabbis. These are that **prayer should begin with praise, ask for the world's needs and end with thanks**. In addition the **Amidah** covers people's two great needs: **spiritual** (e.g. asking for forgiveness) and **physical** (e.g. the need for food).



GCSE Religious Studies Unit 2 - 2.2b Judaism - practices (Key sources of wisdom & authority are included on the back of the sheet)

Rituals and ceremonies



Judaism has rituals and ceremonies to mark birth, coming of age, marriage and death.

At **birth** boys are **circumcised** at 8 days old in a ceremony called **Brit Milah**. Through this they enter into the covenant of Abraham. **Girls have a naming ceremony called Brit Bat**.

On coming of age at 13 boys become **Bar Mitzvah** (son of the commandment) after which they can **read in the synagogue**, wear **tefillin** and **tallit** and **make up the minyan**. **Girls have a Bat Mitzvah ceremony** (daughter of the commandment) **assuming the same duties as boys in liberal Judaism**. In **orthodox Judaism** the ceremony is at 12 but **they do not take on the same duties**.

There is a **mitzvah** (law) that Jews should marry and have **children**. The wedding takes place under a **huppah** (canopy) and is based on the **Ketubah** (marriage contract). The **rabbi** recites 7 blessings. **Orthodox** ceremonies can only be between two Jews. **Liberal Jews** allow mixed marriages.

At death the family say prayers, **tear their clothing and then the body is prepared for burial**. The funeral is very simple and is followed by a period of mourning. The **Yarzeit** is the anniversary of a death and is marked by **kaddish prayers**.

Shabbat

Shabbat is the **day of rest** which is on a Saturday. For Jews it begins on Friday at sunset and ends at sunset on Saturday. **Orthodox Jews** have 39 categories of work which must be avoided. **Liberal Jews** take a more relaxed attitude.

1. The **Shabbat** begin with the **woman of the home lighting the Shabbat candles**. 2. **Families go to synagogue** on **Shabbat** morning to hear the **Torah sidra** and the **rabbi's** sermon. 3. **Shabbat** worship continues with a meal at home when the father blesses the children saying the **kiddush** blessing over the wine and **challot** bread. 4. The **Shabbat** ends at sunset on Saturday with the **Havdalah** ceremony when the father blesses a cup of wine, the **Havdalah** spice box and a lighted candle.

Shabbat is important for Jews because: it is a **mitzvah** to keep **Shabbat** in the 10 commandments; it is a chance to renew and refresh yourself; it is a time to reflect on life; it is a time to learn about G-d and faith; it is a time to socialise with your family.

Shabbat is important for the Jewish community because: it is the oldest festival and a tradition; it is G-d's gift to the Jewish people and binds them together; it reminds Jews that they were once slaves in Egypt—rest from work is freedom; it helps families grow in faith.



Festivals



Rosh Hashanah is Jewish new year and **recalls Moses going up Mt. Sinai to collect the 10 Commandments** to replace the golden calf showing G-d had forgiven the people after they repented. In the month before the **Shofar** horn is **blown every day** in the synagogue. It is a time to reflect on sins, repent and make resolutions for the year ahead

Yom Kippur is the **day of atonement**, 10 days after Rosh Hashanah. It is a day of sacrifice when people: fast; reflect on their sins; confess and pray for forgiveness, wear no jewellery or leather shoes; share in the **Kol Nidrei** prayer at a synagogue service. It is a **solemn day helping Jews reflect on their life and pray for help to keep their resolutions**.

Sukkot is a reminder of the 40 years in the wilderness after the Exodus. Families make shelters to remind them of their ancestors and attend synagogue each day with an **Etrag** (citrus fruit) and a **Lulav** (palm branch).

Pesach is the 7 day festival of Passover recalling how G-d saved them from slavery in Egypt. The **Seder** meal is the heart of the celebration with its **Hagadah** story of the Exodus and symbolic foods.

Shavuot is the Feast of Weeks and is a time to give thanks to G-d for the gift of the **Torah**. It involved readings of the **Torah**, 10 Commandments. It is a celebration of all that the *Mitzvot* gives the Jewish people

Features of a synagogue

A synagogue may have a **Star of David** or a **Menorah** on the outside. They are **built facing Jerusalem where the Temple stood**.

All synagogues have a **sink** at the entrance for ceremonial cleansing on entry.

The **Holy Ark** (**Aron Hakodesh**) is the focal point, often with embroidered black and gold curtains. It contains the **Torah scrolls** (**Sefer Torah**).

Above the **Ark** is the **Ner Tamid** (everlasting light) which is kept lit as a reminder of the **menorah** (lampstand) that was kept burning at all times in the Temple, symbolising G-d's eternal presence.

The **Bimah** is a reading desk with chairs at each side for the **rabbi** and the **chazzan/cantor** who leads the prayers. The scrolls are read using a **Yad** (a stick with a finger on the end) to keep the scrolls clean.

There is also a **menorah** and on the wall next to, or above the Ark are the words of the **10 Commandments**.

In **Orthodox synagogues** women/men sit separately; the rabbi and cantor are always men; only men read from the Torah scrolls; prayers are in Hebrew; there are prayers for the rebuilding of the Temple.



	SOURCES OF WISDOM AND AUTHORITY	
	Topic	Quote/Reference
		Source
1	Public acts of worship	Worship is the way to repay G-d for his great goodness. Psalm 116 (The Ketuvim)
2	The Tenakh and Talmud	Only eat animals that have a split hoof and chew the cud. Leviticus (The Torah)
3	Prayer	Cast your cares upon the L-rd and he will sustain you. Psalm 55 (The Ketuvim)
4	<i>Shema and Amidah</i>	“Hear, O Israel, The L-rd is our G-d, the L-rd is one” The Shema (Deuteronomy 6) (The Torah)
5	Rituals and ceremonies	“This is my covenant with you and your descendants...the covenant you are to keep. Every male amongst you shall be circumcised” Genesis (The Torah)
6	<i>Shabbat</i>	“Remember the Sabbath day by keeping it holy. Six days you shall labour and do all of your work, but the seventh day is a Sabbath to the L-rd your G-d.” The 4th Commandment (Exodus 20) (The Torah)
7	Festivals	The L-rd's Passover lasts for seven days and for that time 'you must eat bread made without yeast'. Leviticus (The Torah)
8	Features of a synagogue	The lamps in the sanctuary must be kept burning from morning to evening Exodus 27 (The Torah)