

Judaism Workbook

11 into 12 Transition



Name:

Key Concepts Judaism



1. **Covenant:** An agreement, contract or promise given to the Jews by God. For example, the covenant of
2. **Kosher:** Food that is 'fit' or '.....'. It includes the types of food that Jewish people are able to eat and the way in which it is prepared. For example, Jews are not allowed to mix meat with dairy in the same
3. **Messiah:** (or Mashiach) This means the '..... one'. Jews believe that their Messiah will be chosen by G_d to put an end to evil in the world. The Messiah will unite the nations and return the Jews to the
4. **Mitzvot:** This means 'commandment'. Jewish people observe (follow) 613 mitzvot. Included in this number is the original 10 Commandments, given toon Mount Sinai.
5. : (or Sabbath) This is the holy day – or special day of rest – for Jewish people. Lasting 25 hours, it begins at on Friday night and ends at sunset on Saturday night. It is a day of rest and celebration. No..... can be carried out on this day.
6. **Shekinah:** This means 'dwelling'. It identifies the divine..... of G_d. For example, when Moses spoke to G-d through the burning
7. **Synagogue:** This means 'house of assembly' and is where Jewish people come together as ato worship G-d. It can also be translated as '.....' as it is where people come to learn about G-d.
8. **Torah:** This means '.....' and is the law of God that was revealed to Moses and recorded in the first five books of the.....
Scriptures.

You will need to learn these words and definitions for your exam! In our a) style questions, you will have to give a definition and an example for each word!

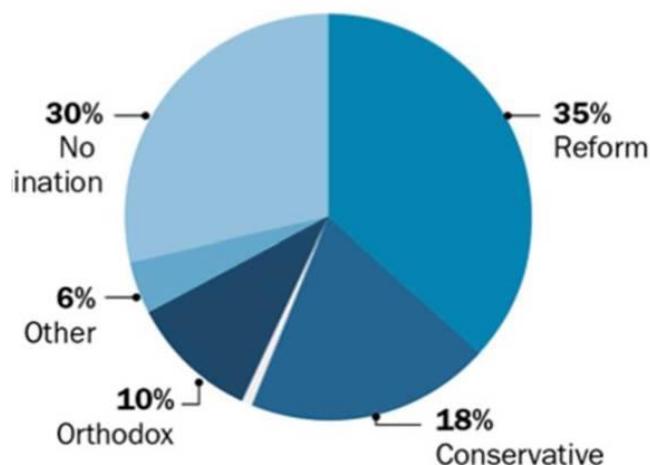
Jewish Denominations

There is great diversity of beliefs within the Jewish religion. Maimonides put together 13 principle beliefs that were in the Torah. These are:

1. God exists, is perfect and created everything
2. God is One
3. God does not have a physical body and is not affected by the same needs as humans
4. God is eternal
5. Only God should be worshipped
6. God communicates with people through prophets
7. Moses is the most important prophet
8. The Torah was given to Moses by God
9. The Torah is God's law and cannot be changed
10. God is all-knowing and knows everything that is going to happen
11. God will reward good and punish evil
12. The belief that the Messiah will come
13. The dead will be resurrected

The main Jewish groups in UK are:

1. Orthodox Jews: the largest branch of Judaism in Britain. Orthodox Jews believe that God gave the Torah to Moses on Mount Sinai and must follow it
2. Reform Jews: believe that Jewish practices have to be harmonised with modern life



Following the Torah

Each Jew must decide whether they will follow the Torah as it was originally intended or whether they believe that religion must adapt and change. The decision will make a difference on how they live their lives. These beliefs will be based on each Jew's individual interpretation of the Torah.

Orthodox Jews

Orthodox Jews live closely to the teachings of the Torah as it came from God and cannot be changed. God is the law-giver, so it must be obeyed and cannot be interpreted. They will try to observe all 613 mitzvot. God's rules are constant. Society may change but Jewish teachings do not. Some Jews are Charedi (ultra-orthodox) and spend their lives devoted to the study and practice of the Torah.





Reform Jews

Only the ethical laws of the Torah are binding. Reform Jews believe that some laws were products of their time and place, so it is not necessary to treat them as absolute. Religion should move with the times. They do not take the teachings of the Torah literally. Interpretation relies on individual reasoning and conscience.

Secular Jews

Some Jews do not believe in God and so not see that the teachings of the Torah are sacred. They are 'secular' (non-religious) Jews who are born to Jewish parents, but who do not observe the religious practices and teachings of Judaism.

Jewish Denominations: Questions

1. Who put together the 13 principle (main) beliefs in the Torah?

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2. State three of the principle beliefs.

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3. What are the two main Jewish groups in UK?

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4. What must each Jew decide?

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5. How do Orthodox Jews live?

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6. How many of the mitzvot will Orthodox Jews try to observe (follow)?

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7. What will Orthodox Jews spend their lives devoted to?

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8. Which laws of the Torah are binding for Reform Jews?

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9. Why are some laws not necessary in Reform Judaism?

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10. What does interpretation rely on?

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11. What are 'secular' Jews?

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Creation

For Jews, God is the creator of the universe. They believe that whatever the exact process was that created the universe, God is the overall architect of that creation.

The main events in creation are:

1. Creation of the universe
2. Creation of the earth
3. Creation of Adam and Eve (humankind)
4. Temptation of Adam and Eve
5. The fall of humankind from grace

Genesis 1 tells us:

“In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. Now the earth was formless and empty, darkness was over the surface of the deep, and the Spirit of God was hovering over the waters. And God said, ‘Let there be light,’ and there was light.” (Genesis 1: 1-3)



The Big Bang is the idea that about 13,700 million years ago all the matter in the universe was concentrated at a single point. A huge explosion – A Big Bang – sent it all spiralling outwards, eventually creating the universe as we know it today. Scientists believe that they have found evidence for the Big Bang, including that the universe is still expanding.

Genesis 2 and 3:

- In Genesis 2, Adam lives in the Garden of Eden – a paradise. God creates a 'companion' for Adam from his rib. Adam names her 'Eve'.
- “Then the Lord God made a woman from the rib he had taken out of the man, and he brought her to the man. The man said, “This is now bone of my bones, flesh of my flesh; she shall be called woman, for she was taken out of man.” (Genesis 2:22-23)

- God gives Adam and Eve one command, which is to not eat from the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil that grows in the garden.
- God says, **“you must not touch it, or you will die.”** (Genesis 2: 3)
- The Genesis creation story makes it clear that humankind is unique among God’s creation, as we are ‘created in God’s image’.
- Genesis 2 describes ‘The Fall’ – when Adam and Eve are tempted by a serpent (the devil) to eat from the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil against God’s will.
- The serpent tricks Adam and Eve into thinking that if they eat from the tree, they will become ‘like God’ and be as knowledgeable as God. Eve gives in to the temptation and then gives some of the fruit to Adam.
- They confess to God but, as a punishment, God sends them from the Garden of Eden. They are no longer able to eat from the Tree of Life and therefore they are no longer immortal, and death enters the world.
- For many Jews, the world is too wonderful and complex to have happened by chance, so it must have had a creator – God.
- Celebrating God as the creator is an important part of Judaism. Prayers are said in Orthodox services which illustrate how God created the world:
- **“Blessed be he who spoke, and the world existed.”**
- Each week, Jews celebrate the festival of Shabbat. This is a day not only of rest but also of celebration of creation. Just as God rested on the seventh day, so observant (Orthodox) Jews do not work on Shabbat.
- Humans are made in the image of God but are sinful and in need of God’s forgiveness. In Genesis, people have a clear purpose – to have ‘dominion’ or powers over the earth, but this must be exercised through Stewardship on God’s behalf.



Stewardship

The idea that people have a God-given duty to take care of the earth in a responsible way, looking after both the environment and animals.

Humans act as caretakers of God’s world, preserving and conserving the environment.

Dominion

Having control over the earth and managing God’s creation. This is a more active role and gives mankind more

power and autonomy over their choices regarding the earth and the environment.

Original Sin

The ‘evil’ or ‘sin’ that is innate in all human beings, as a consequence of The Fall.

Creation: Questions

1. What are the main events of creation?

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2. What is the order of creation?

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3. What is the Big Bang Theory?

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4. What command does God give to Adam and Eve in Genesis 2?

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5. What is the consequence of going against this command?

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6. What is 'the Fall'?

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7. What is the prayer said in Orthodox services that illustrates how God created the world?

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8. What is the importance of Shabbat? How is it linked to creation?

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9. What is mankind's clear purpose, given to humans in Genesis?

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10. What is 'stewardship'?

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11. What is 'dominion'?

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12. What is 'original sin'?

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The Nature of G_d

The Shema and beliefs in G_d

- The Shema is the basic prayer of Judaism and is said every morning and evening
- It states the basic belief of Jews which is that there is one G_d (monotheism)
- They believe G_d is the creator and designer of the universe
- G_d is supposed to be omnipresent (everywhere), omnipotent (all powerful) and omniscient (all knowing)
- When speaking about G_d, they often use the word Hashem which means 'the name', because when speaking of the One we should not use His name unnecessarily
- G_d is holy – which means special, sacred and to be respected
- G_d's rules are to be followed and obeyed

HEAR O ISRAEL
THE LORD OUR GOD, THE LORD IS ONE
LOVE THE LORD YOUR GOD
with all your heart and
with all your soul and
with all your strength
THESE COMMANDMENTS THAT I GIVE YOU
TODAY ARE TO BE ON YOUR HEARTS
IMPRESS THEM ON
YOUR CHILDREN
Talk about them when you
sit at home and when you
walk along the road,
WHEN YOU LIE DOWN AND WHEN YOU GET
UP. TIE THEM AS SYMBOLS ON YOUR HANDS
AND BIND THEM ON YOUR FOREHEADS.
Write them on the
doorframes of your houses
and on your gates.
DEUTERONOMY SIX FOUR THROUGH NINE

This is the shema prayer. It is said daily by Jewish people and expresses their beliefs in G-d. For example, that there is one G-d who created the universe.

God is:

1. **One:** There is only one G-d in Judaism. This is stated in the schema: "*The Lord is one*".
2. **Creator:** In *Genesis 1* it says that G_d created the world in seven stages. ("*And God said, 'Let there be light,' and there was light*"). Genesis also tells us about the creation of humanity, ("*So God created mankind in his own image*") and how G_d gave humans dominion (control) over the earth. ("*They may rule over the fish in the sea and the birds in the sky*").
3. **Law-Giver and Judge:** In Exodus 20, G_d gives the Jewish people the 10 Commandments, starting with, "*You shall have no other gods before me.*" In Exodus 34, G_d is said to be, "*merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love*", but G_d is also a vengeful warrior.
4. **Present:** G_d is omnipresent (everywhere). This divine presence is called the

Shekinah.

- When Moses received the covenant, he was "*not aware that his face was radiant because he had spoken with the Lord*" (Exodus 34). The shekinah is also used to describe G_d's more feminine attributes and characteristics.
- Shechinah – Divine Presence: The place where God's presence rests and can be felt.
- Shechinah is sometimes used to refer to God himself but more usually to God's presence in the world. It comes from the word 'shakan', which means **God's dwelling on earth**.
- Shekinah can also be used to refer to the **female characteristics** of God.

- There are different views regarding where the Shekinah rested after the destruction of the Temple. Some believe that the Shekinah followed the Jews into exile. Others believe that the Shekinah never fully left the Temple area and that is why Israel has special spiritualism.
- However, if God is meant to be everywhere (omnipresent), why is the Shekinah important? For most Jews, it is not just about where God is, but where God can be felt and experienced.
- **Leonard Nimoy** described it as 'a state of grace, a sense of harmony, a sense of inner peace.'

Nature of G-d: Questions

1. What is the Shema?

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2. What is the basic belief of Jews?

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3. What do Jews believe about G-d?

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4. Why would Jews use the word 'Hashem' and what does it mean?

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5. Explain the belief that G-d is One.

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6. Explain the belief that G-d is the Creator.

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7. Explain the belief that G-d is Law-Giver and Judge.

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8. Explain the belief that G-d is Present.

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9. What is the Shekinah?

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10. What word does 'Shekinah' come from and what does it mean?

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11. Why is the Shekinah important?

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Messiah (Mashiach)

Messiah: (or 'Mashiach') This means the 'anointed one'. Jews believe that their Messiah will be chosen by G_d to put an end to evil in the world. The Messiah will unite the nations and return the Jews to the Promised Land.

Jewish beliefs about the Messiah:

- One day the Messiah will come to save the world. His arrival will signal the end of the world
- The Messiah will be descended from King David
- The Messiah will lead the Jewish people and show everyone in the world what to do
- Knowledge of G_d will fill the world
- There will be peace on earth and even animals will not kill each other
- Jews are still waiting for the Messiah to come
- The Messiah will re-build the temple
- Jews pray for the arrival of the Messiah
- This means that this life as we know it is temporary and one day it will all be different. It will become a spiritual world that is full of peace
- Most Reform Jews reject the idea of a personal Messiah at whose coming all the righteous dead would arise and live in bliss



Messiah: Questions

1. What is another name for the 'Messiah'?

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2. What does the 'Messiah' mean?

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3. What will the arrival of the Messiah signal?

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4. Who will the Messiah be descended from?

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5. When the Messiah comes, what will fill the world?

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6. What will the Messiah re-build?

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7. What will change about life as we know it, once the Messiah comes?

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8. What do Reform Jews reject the idea of?

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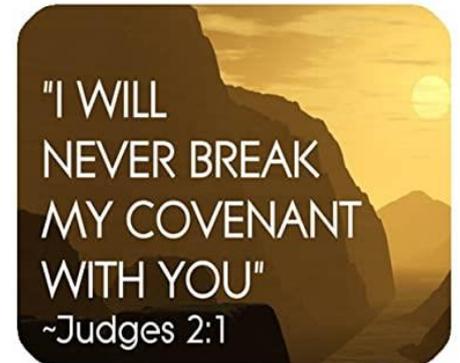
Covenant

The Abrahamic Covenant is the covenant (agreement or promise) made between God and Abraham. God wanted the Jews to live their lives in such a way as to show the world that God actually was the **one and only** all-powerful God, whom people should follow and worship.

God promises to:

Make of Abraham a 'great nation'; guide Abraham

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- Make Abraham fruitful (give him lots of descendants/children)
- Give Abraham and his descendants a land to call their own. This is known as the Promised Land (*the land of milk and honey*). *"The whole land of Canaan, where you are now an alien, I will give as an everlasting possession to you and your descendants after you; and I will be their God"*



Abraham promises to:

- Circumcise as a sign of the covenant. All boys, aged 8 days old, must be circumcised
- Follow the mitzvot given to Abraham,

Exodus 3: God also said to Moses, *"Say this to the people of Israel: 'The LORD, [b] the God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, has sent me to you.' This is my name forever, and thus I am to be remembered throughout all generations."*

Exodus 20: God gave Moses the 10 Commandments. This is important because it gives Jews a guide for living. Each saying/commandment is sacred, binding and the word of G_d.

The Ten Sayings (Commandments)

- They were given to Moses by God and should be followed by all Jewish people
- Moses climbed up a mountain called Mount Sinai and after being up there 40 days, came back down with 2 stone tablets with the commandments written on them
- There are another set of rules Moses learned, and in total there are 613 commandments he was told
- Some of the rules show that God is to be respected (*do not worship false gods*)
- Some of the rules show that God cares about the Jewish people (*to give to charity*)
- Some of the rules show that God wants justice and fairness (*not to take revenge/not to take a bribe/Not to testify falsely*)

Breaking the covenant can lead to exile from the Promised Land (e.g. when King Solomon followed the gods of his foreign wives). In Exodus 3, God says, *"Any uncircumcised male who is not circumcised in the flesh of his foreskin shall be cut off from his people; he has broken my covenant."*

Covenant: Questions

1. What is the Abrahamic covenant?

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2. What did God want the Jews to show the world?

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3. In the Abrahamic covenant, what **three** things does God promise?

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4. In the Abrahamic covenant, what **two** things does Abraham promise?

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5. What did God give to Moses and why is it important?

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6. What is another name for the Ten Commandments?

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7. Which mountain did Moses retrieve the Commandments from?

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8. How many rules in total did God give to Moses?

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9. What is a rule that shows how God is to be respected?

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10. What is a rule that shows how God cares about the Jewish people?

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11. What is a rule that shows how God wants justice and fairness?

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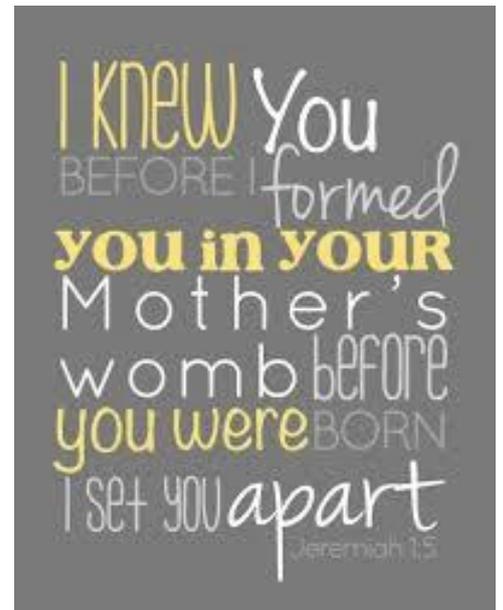
12. What can breaking the covenant lead to?

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Life on Earth

The Nature and Importance of Pikuach Nefesh or the sanctity of life (the belief that all life is special, sacred and belongs to God)

Pikuach Nefesh is the belief that, when life is involved, all Sabbath laws or mitzvot may be overruled to protect the health of an individual. The overruling of the laws is not just permitted but required if it will save a person's life. For example, Jews fast on Yom Kippur for ten days, however a sick person **must** break the fast. There are no consequences for breaking the mitzvot in these circumstances as it is not righteous to risk a life. In fact, it is foolish and sinful.



Genesis 1:26 Then God said, *"Let us make mankind in our image, in our likeness"*

Talmud B Yoma 84b *"One must...save a life on the Sabbath... He need not obtain permission."*

Psalms 139 *"For you created my inmost being; you knit me together in my mother's womb. I praise you because I am fearfully and wonderfully made"*

Jeremiah 1:5 *"Before I formed you in the womb I knew^[a] you, before you were born I set you apart; I appointed you as a prophet to the nations"*

Relationship between free will and the 613 mitzvot (duties) between humans and God

If humans do not have free will—the ability to choose—then actions are morally and religiously insignificant. We know this is not true, otherwise stealing and murder wouldn't be unacceptable. The Jews were given the Torah and commanded to follow its rules, with the promise of reward and revenge. For Judaism to make sense, then, humans must have free will, otherwise there was little point in giving the Jewish people a Torah.

The Torah gives Jews 613 commandments and tells them to do good and not to do evil. Therefore, it is within a human's power to do either good or evil and they have the free will to choose. The Torah says that, with God's help, we all have the ability to do good.

Life on earth: Questions

1. What is another word for 'sanctity of life'?

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2. What does 'sanctity of life' mean?

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3. What is 'Pikuach Nefesh'?

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4. When might a person break their fast on Yom Kippur?

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5. What consequences are there for breaking the mitzvot in life or death circumstances?

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6. What does the Torah say that gives Jews the belief that all life is sacred and special?

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7. Why is the belief that humans have free will important?

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8. What is within a human's power?

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9. With God's help, what do we all have the ability to do?

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Mitzvot and Mitzvah Day

Mitzvot means:

- Commands or rules
- Keeping the duties given by God to Moses
- Doing good deeds
- Being given an honour such as reading from the Torah



The Talmud refers to the 613 mitzvot in the Torah. This number is represented by the number of knots on the tallit, which is worn by many Jews during worship.

For Orthodox Jews, keeping the mitzvot is an important principle of Judaism. Although many Reform Jews try to keep the mitzvot, they consider that many of the mitzvot are incompatible with modern life. Decisions about which ones to observe are often based on individual choice.

Regardless of whether a Jew is Orthodox or Reform, a Jew believes that the mitzvot help them to build a relationship with God and to gain closeness with God. Although there are many mitzvot, Jews believe that it is through the practice of treating people with respect that Jews build their relationship with God.

How each mitzvot may be related to modern day developments may be interpreted differently between Jews, e.g. abortion, contraception, self-defence, nuclear war, killing animals and turning off life support machines.

Mitzvah Day started in Britain in 2008 and has now spread across the world. It encourages people to join together to make a positive impact on their community. Jews and non-Jews work together to reduce poverty, care for the environment and care for others.

The day is rooted in the values of the 613 mitzvot. There are 3 Jewish concepts that are particularly important on Mitzvah Day:

1. **Tikkun olam**: Healing or Perfecting the World: This concept looks at protecting the environment and defending human rights. Projects have included providing care to the elderly and planting trees in local areas
2. **Gemilut hasadim**: Giving of Loving Kindness: With this concept, you should expect nothing in return. It is simply about acts of kindness
3. **Tzedakah**: Righteousness and Justice: Shown through social action and acts of loving-kindness - not because it feels good but because it is the right thing to do.

Mitzvot: Questions

1. What is the meaning of 'mitzvot'?

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2. How is the number of mitzvot reflected in the Tallit?

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3. What do Orthodox Jews believe about following the mitzvot?

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4. What do Reform Jews believe about following the mitzvot?

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5. What can each mitzvot be related to?

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6. What is Mitzvah Day?

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7. What are the three Jewish concepts that are important on Mitzvah Day?

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The Afterlife

There is **no set view** on Jewish beliefs about the afterlife – no one agrees! Jews have a special term for the afterlife – **Olam Ha-Ba**, which means, ‘the world to come’.

In the Tenakh we read, "Dust you are and to dust shall you return" – so some believe that you just die and end up in the ground.



The book of Daniel says, “Many of those who sleep in the dusty earth will awaken: these for everlasting life and these for shame, for everlasting abhorrence.” They believe this will happen when the Mashiach comes as he will bring about resurrection of the dead.

Jews believe that **the importance of life is the way in which it is lived on earth**. Whatever happens after death is in G-d’s hands and should be left to G-d to arrange. The attitude of Judaism might best be summed up as "We really do not know, but if there is a life after this one, and a reward for what we do, then surely it will be dependent upon the kind of life we have lived ". The Torah states that **God rewards and punishes** members of the Covenant on the basis of their faithfulness to the mitzvot (duties) outlined in the Torah.

Reform Judaism does not have an official opinion - and generally considers *there is no afterlife*. Those that do believe in the afterlife do not have a literal meaning of the afterlife, but they consider it to be more of a spiritual survival.

Orthodox Jews sometimes believe that the souls of all are resurrected. After death, the souls come together in Sheol (a place where the dead live, not dissimilar to the Christian idea of heaven).

Some Orthodox Jews can believe that the souls of the wicked are tormented by demons of their own creation, or that wicked souls are simply destroyed at death.

Not all Jews agree on what the afterlife is like, however these are two theories:

1. In heaven, one story teaches, Moses sits and teaches Torah all day long. For the righteous people this is heaven; for the evil people, it is hell. However, this raises the question of whether God is truly ‘good’, rewarding the good people and punishing the bad. Especially if, at the end of time, Moses and Hitler share the same fate.
2. Another folktale teaches that in both heaven and hell, human beings cannot bend their elbows. In hell people are perpetually starved; in heaven each person feeds his neighbour.

Afterlife: Questions

1. What is the meaning of 'Olam Ha-Ba'?

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2. What does it say in the Tenakh about 'dust'?

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3. What does the book of Daniel say about the afterlife?

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4. What will the Mashiach bring about?

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5. What do Jews believe is important?

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6. What can the attitude of Judaism about the afterlife be summed up as?

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7. What does the Torah state about God's judgements?

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8. What does Reform Judaism generally believe?

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9. What does Orthodox Judaism generally believe?

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10. What is Sheol?

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11. Explain the two theories about the afterlife.

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