

Judaism – Beliefs and Teachings

Intent

After studying Catholic, Christian and Jewish beliefs about God being responsible for the origins of the universe, and being an all powerful, all loving God despite evil and suffering, we now move on to focus in depth on connected beliefs and teachings in Judaism.

This module on Jewish beliefs and teachings explores the nature of God in Judaism. We will investigate different beliefs about God and the Messiah and focus on the importance of covenants and the impact of God's covenant with Abraham and Moses. We will then consider the importance of life in Judaism and the relationship between free will and mitzvot, and explore different beliefs about life after death.

In this module it is possible to use the previous two modules as comparisons in terms of beliefs and teachings about the nature of God and other important beliefs.



Process

1. God as One and Creator

In this first topic we explore the nature of God for Jews, in comparison to what we learnt about God in the Catholic paper. In this topic, we use the **Shema** as the source of authority to understand God as One. We explore the belief that God created the world and everything in it.

2. God as Lawgiver and Judge

Following on from this, we will explore the belief that God is lawgiver and judge, using the **Ten Commandments** as a source of authority. We will focus on how God's role is associated with Jewish beliefs on **Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur**

3. The Divine Presence

The next belief about the nature of God is explored in this topic. Here, we explore the concept of God's divine presence – **The Shekhinah** – and find out where this can be seen in Jewish scripture. Sources of authority from **Exodus** are used to show Moses' experience of divine presence.

4. The Messianic Age and the Messiah

Following on from beliefs about the nature of God in the last three topics, we now focus on the nature and role of the Messiah, exploring different Jewish beliefs about the **Messiah and Messianic Age** from Orthodox and Reform Judaism.

5. Covenant with Abraham

Having studied the nature of God, we now focus on God's role in the covenant with Abraham. We explore the promises made to Abraham by God and how Abraham stayed faithful to God throughout. We also consider the importance of the **Promised Land** and what the covenant shows about God and his people.

6. Covenant with Moses

In this topic, we will explore God's covenant with Moses and the **covenant at Sinai**. We will focus on what both covenants say about God and Moses, along with the Jewish people. We consider how Moses is seen as the **'greatest teacher'** and how the Jews are seen as God's **'chosen people'**.

Process

7. Importance of the Ten Commandments

Following on from the covenant with Moses, we now look to understanding the importance of the Ten Commandments and how they underpin the Jews' relationship with God and each other. We use the **Ten Commandments** as our source of authority.



8. Free Will and Mitzvot

Now that we have explored the Ten Commandments as part of the covenant with God, we now focus on understanding the importance of **mitzvot** in Jewish worship and everyday life. We This topic will also examine the relationship between **free will** and mitzvot. Laws from **Leviticus** are used as sources of authority.



9. Sanctity of Life

The Ten Commandments and other mitzvot refer to how holy and sacred human life is because it has been created by God. This topic emphasises this and explains how saving a life (**pikuach nefesh**) is more important than any other mitzvot in Judaism.



10. Life After Death, Judgement and Resurrection

Following on from examining the sanctity of life belief, we now look at different Jewish beliefs on life after death. Orthodox and Reform Jews have different views on life after death, judgement and resurrection and we will investigate these.



Impact

This process will enable the understanding of:

- Jewish belief in one God and how this is expressed in the Shema.
- Jewish beliefs about God as creator, judge and lawgiver, and divine presence.
- Orthodox and Reform views on who the Messiah is, when Jews believe the Messiah will come and what the Messiah will do.
- God's covenants with Abraham and Moses and the importance of the Promised Land and the Ten Commandments.
- Jewish beliefs about Pikuach Nefesh.
- The relationship between free will and the 613 Mitzvot.
- Orthodox and Reform views on judgement and life after death.

Progress will be shown by:

- Formative assessment of past-exam question answers completed in class and at home, and improvements made from feedback.
- Formative assessment through the re-capping of previous modules and knowledge checks.
- Summative assessment through mid-module and end of module assessments based on past exams.