

The nature of God (what is God like?)

- God is omnipotent (all powerful)
- God is omnibenevolent (all loving)
- God is just (fair)



Key quotes

“For nothing is impossible with God” – shows God is omnipotent

“For God so loved the world, he gave his One and Only Son” – God is omnibenevolent

Incarnation

Incarnation - the belief that Jesus was God in human form (becoming flesh, taking a human form)

Jesus was fully God and fully human, which helps explain his miracles and resurrection.

His words and teachings have authority because they are the word of God.

Christians believe that Jesus is the Messiah (saviour)



Key quote → “The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us.” John 1:14 NIV

Resurrection and life after death

Christians believe that because Jesus resurrected they will too.

There are different Christian beliefs about resurrection: some believe a person’s soul is resurrected straight after death, others believe it happens at the end of time when Jesus returns to play the role of judge.

How does the belief in resurrection impact Christians?

- Means life after death is real
- Gives them confidence in the face of death
- Inspires them to live a good life and follow Gods laws



Key quote → “So it will be the resurrection of the dead.”

Sin and salvation

Sin – any thought or action that separates humans from God



Original sin – everyone is built with the urge to sin/Adam and Eve brought sin into the world

Salvation – saving the soul from sin, made possible by Jesus

Grace – God’s love which humans do not have to earn

Salvation through good works → can be achieved by doing good and following God’s laws “Faith...without action is dead”

Salvation through grace → salvation is given by God to show his love, does not have to be earned “For it is by grace you have been saved”

Creation

Creation – the act by which God brought the universe into being



The Word – term used at the beginning of John’s gospel to refer to God the Son

Christians believe that God created the earth and all living things. Some take the creation story in Genesis literally, therefore they believe God created the world in 6 days and rested on the 7th whereas other Christians believe it is symbolic and teaches them about what God is like.

Key quote → “in the beginning, God created the heavens and earth”

Crucifixion



Crucifixion – Roman method of execution by which criminals were fixed to a cross

- Jesus was accused of blasphemy (proclaiming to be God) and was crucified on Good Friday
- Although he was fully God he still felt pain as he was also fully human
- Christians believe God understands suffering as Jesus suffered and therefore accept suffering as a part of life
- Jesus’ death on the cross washed away humanities sins

Key quote → “Father, into your hands I commit my spirit.” Luke 23:46 NIV

The afterlife and judgement

Day of Judgement – a time when the world will end and every soul will be judged

Christians believe Jesus plays the role of judge as he has lived life as a human and set the path for Christians to follow

They will be judged based on their behaviour and actions as shown in the Parable of the Sheep and Goats

Key quotes → “I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me”

“For I was hungry and you gave me something to eat...”



The role of Christ in salvation

Atonement – restoring the relationship between God and humans through the life, death and resurrection of Jesus

- Jesus’ crucifixion made up for the original sin of Adam and Eve
- The death of Jesus restored the broken relationship between God and humans which allowed for salvation to be achieved
- Christians can now be forgiven for their sins and go to heaven
- Jesus atoned for the sins of humanity

Key quote → “For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord” Romans 6:23 NIV



The Trinity

Trinity – Christians believe there are three persons in the One God: Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Each person of the Trinity is fully God.

The Father – creator of life

The Son – became incarnate through Jesus. Fully God and fully human

The Holy Spirit – guides and comforts Christians

Key quote → “ We believe in one God”



Resurrection and ascension

Resurrection - rising from the dead. Jesus rising from the dead on Easter Sunday

Ascension – the event, 40 days after Jesus’ resurrection, when Jesus returned to God, the Father in heaven

Christianity is based on the belief that Jesus died and resurrected

Resurrection is important as it teaches Christians not to fear death and that their sins will be forgiven if they follow God’s laws.

Ascension is important as it shows Jesus is with God in heaven.

Key quote → “He is risen!”



Heaven and hell

Heaven – a state of eternal happiness (with God)

Hell – place of eternal suffering (separated from God for eternity)

Purgatory – intermediate state where the soul is cleansed (Catholic belief)

Christians believe if they have lived a good life and had faith in God they will be rewarded with heaven and if they have lived a bad life they will be punished with hell.

Some believe that heaven and hell are physical places, whilst others believe they are spiritual places.



Exam advice

1 mark Q – multiple choice (normally linked to key words)

2 mark Q – two simple bullet points

4 mark Q – for the beliefs it will ask how a belief in something INFLUENCES a Christian today. This effectively means how this belief makes them act/change their behaviour. Two P.E.E paragraphs

5 mark Q – ‘Explain two’ – two P.E.E paragraphs required. In addition to this you will also need a relevant teaching/quote to support your points.

12 mark Q – evaluative question. You will be given a statement and will have to come up with two agree arguments and two disagree arguments (4 P.E.E paragraphs with two quotes). You will also need to reach a justified conclusion. What is the strongest argument and why?



Who are the Jews?

In Judaism G-d is written without the 'o'. Jews should never erase or dispose of G-d's name once written. By writing G-d's name in this way they will avoid violating this law. G-d is English term, not the Hebrew, which is YHWH. It is a way of showing reverence and respect.

History of Judaism

Started about 4000 years ago. Jews were originally known as Israelites. They were tribal and nomadic, wandering the Middle Eastern deserts. They were kept in slavery by an Egyptian Pharaoh. Once free they went to Israel, which they believe is their homeland.



Today Judaism is a global religion.

Israel: 7.8 million

USA: 5.7 million

UK: 270, 000 (2/3 in London)



Books of Judaism

- **TORAH**: First five books of the Old Testament.
- **TALMUD**: Commentary on the Torah. Its aim is to teach. Made up of- **MISHNAH**: Written version of the oral law AND **GEMARA**: The record of the discussions following the writing of the Mishnah.
- **TENAKH** The five books of Moses, the Nevi'im (prophets) and Ketuvim (writings) 24 books total.
- **HALAKAH**: Collection of Jewish Laws, based on the written and oral Torah, including the 613 mitzvot.

Rules

The rules followed by Jews come from a number of places.



- The 7 LAWS OF NOAH
- The 10 LAWS OF MOSES
- The 613 oral laws- MITZVOT Oral laws: not recorded in the five books of Moses.

Mitzvot (singular mitzvah): 613 commandments covering religious and moral conduct.

Jewish Groups

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- **Orthodox**: the written law of the Torah given by G-d to Moses has total authority in modern life. The Talmud also has total authority. Very traditional. Strictly observe the Sabbath. In Britain 50% of Jews are Orthodox.
 - **Reform/ Progressive**: started in 19th century Germany. Their aim was to bring traditional Judaism in line with modern life. They don't feel the need to follow the laws to the letter. They believe in G-d, the Torah and Israel. The Torah is revealed continuously allowing Judaism to move with modern times. Have given females a bigger role in the faith, e.g. Female Rabbis.
 - **Conservative**: Middle ground between Orthodox and Reform Traditional Judaism but practised in a spirit of open minded enquiry and tolerance, that is open to the modern world.
 - **Liberal**: more radical than reform Judaism. They think religious law should be reassessed alongside the modern world. The Torah is G-d inspired but human written so can contain mistakes. So we must interpret according to modern issues.

Rabbi: leader of the Jewish community, leads service in the synagogue.



AQA GCSE Religious Studies: Judaism Beliefs

G-d as one.
Monotheistic: G-d is one. Jews believe there is only one G-d.
 G-d is an indivisible and eternal being, there is only one G-d worthy of worship and this G-d is the source of all Jewish morality, beliefs and values.
The Shema: an important Jewish prayer that is repeated three times daily. It is the declaration of Jewish faith.
Key quote: "the Lord is One." – The Shema



Creation
Ex Nihilo: the Latin phrase for "From Nothing"
 The creation story can be found in Genesis- the first book of the Torah. G-d had the power (omnipotence) to make the world from nothing, hence. He made the world in 6 days and rested on the 7th.
Key quotes: "Let there be light"
 "Let us make mankind in our image"




Evil and suffering
Moral evil- caused by humans. A result of free will. The free choice G-d gave us to make our own decisions. This was important so we could really choose to follow G-d. Adam and Eve misused their free will when they ate the forbidden fruit.
Natural evil- caused by nature. Part of G-d's bigger plan for the universe. G-d is transcendent (beyond human understanding and outside the universe), therefore, we cannot understand the complex world G-d has created. Shown in the Book of Job.



Lawgiver and judge
 Commandments in Judaism are called **mitzot**. G-d has given Jews 613 in total. An example are the 10 commandments.
 G-d will judge how good a person is based on how well they follow the mitzvot and their actions. For example G-judged humanity to be bad so sent the Flood to kill them all apart from Noah. Jews are all judged every New Year/ Rosh Hashanah.
Key quotes: " Do not worship any other G-ds" "Do not murder"
 "Now the earth was corrupt in God's sight and was full of violence".



Life after death
Olam Ha-ze: life in the here and now- worry about G-d's judgement in this life and not what might happen when you die!
Olam Ha-ba: the world to come. Many Jews believe in a life after death where our souls will be judged.
Gan Eden: paradise/ heaven.
 This is where you will go if you're judged well.
Sheol: a place of waiting where souls will be cleansed (NOT a place of eternal punishment)



Messiah
 A future leader of the Jews who will rule over humanity with kindness and justice. He will:

- Be a perfect teacher of God's law
- Be a great political leader - inspirational and a good judge
- Be the bringer of peace to the world, uniting humanity

Key quotes: "He will judge between the nations and will settle disputes for many peoples." (Isaiah 2:4) "He will swallow up death forever. The Sovereign Lord will wipe away the tears from all faces" (Isaiah 25:8)



Abraham:
Covenant: an agreement between G-d and human kind.
 G-d promised Abraham a promised land and for him and future Jews. He also promised Abraham many descendants. Abraham had to trust G-d on this as he and his wife Sarah were really old...but they did have a baby called Isaac. Abraham promised to only follow one G-d.
 This agreement still changes behavior of Jews today:
 They circumcise baby boys (this was the physical sign of the covenant) Many Jews have a goal of living in Israel (the homeland).




Moses
 Moses was born in Egypt when Jews were being kept as slaves. They eventually escaped after G-d sent the 10 Plagues. G-d gave Moses rules to help the Jews live harmoniously. He received the 10 Commandments as part of the Covenant at Sinai, they are seen as the foundation of Jewish. They can be split into two groups:
How to have a good relationship with G-d- "Do not worship any other G-ds"
How to have a good relationship with other humans. - "Do not murder".



Key moral beliefs
Justice: bringing about what is right or fair/ making up for a wrong committed.
Tikkun Olam/ Healing the world: being involved in G-d's work to sustain the world. Charity work, helping the environment, praying.
Kindness to others: positive, caring actions which should be shown to all loving things.
 Jewish charities: GIFT or Jewish World Relief.



Sanctity of life : all life is holy as it is created by G-d. Human life should not be misused or abused.
"So God created mankind in his own image." (Genesis 1:27)
 We are all made in the image of G-d making us sacred, holy and worthy of protection.
"He who destroys one soul of a human being, the Scripture considers him as if he should destroy a whole world."
 Only G-d can decide when a life should end and any action that ends a life is considered sinful and as undermining G-d's authority and power. Eg. Murder and active euthanasia would be forbidden.



Pikuach Nefesh: the obligation to save a life, even if doing so breaks Jewish law.
"The Sabbath has been given to you, not you to the Sabbath" Talmud
 G-d gave us rules to help us have a better life, so if we have to break them to save a life that is okay. One of the rules you might break is working on the Sabbath (day of rest). Eg.

- ✓ A doctor could go to work.
- ✓ You could drive a car to take someone to the hospital.



Free will and the mitzvot
Free will: the belief that G-d gives people the opportunity to make decisions for themselves.
 "To Adam he said...' **'Cursed is the ground because of you;'**" This shows that because Adam and Eve misused their free will they would be punished/ cursed.



Using Free will for good actions	Using Free will to justify bad actions
A life of fulfillment Will bring you closer to G-d. G-d will judge you well	You will distance yourself from G-d. G-d will not judge you well in this life or in the afterlife.