YEAR 7 · SUMMER 2 · BRANCH 6: ENCOUNTER · KNOWLEDGE ORGANISER

Judaism and Revelation

KEY QUESTION

How does God reveal Himself to Moses and the Israelites?

Key vocabulary

Covenant: A sacred agreement between God and his people (in Hebrew, *brit*).

Brit milah: Circumcision of a baby boy at 8 days old – the sign of the covenant.

Torah: The first five books of the Tanakh: God's teaching and law given to Moses.

Tanakh: The Jewish Bible: Torah (Law), Nevi'im (Prophets), Ketuvim (Writings).

Mitzvot: Commandments – there are 613 in the Torah (singular: mitzvah).

Exodus: The escape of the Israelites from slavery in Egypt, led by Moses.

Wilderness: The desert where the Israelites wandered for 40 years.

Synagogue: A Jewish house of prayer, study and community gathering.

Shabbat: The day of rest, from sunset on Friday to nightfall on Saturday.

Kosher: 'Fit' or 'proper' – food and practices allowed by Jewish law (kashrut).

Orthodox / Reform: Orthodox Jews keep the mitzvot strictly; Reform Jews adapt practice to modern life.

Antisemitism: Hostility, prejudice or discrimination against Jewish people.

The covenant story

Adam – created in God's image but sent out of Eden after the Fall (Gen 3:23).

Abraham – God promises land, many descendants and a blessing; circumcision is the sign (Gen 17).

Jacob – renamed **Israel**; his 12 sons become the 12 tribes, the 'chosen' family.

Slavery – Jacob's descendants grow in Egypt and are enslaved by Pharaoh.

Growth → Slavery → Wilderness → Promised Land → Exile (Babylon) **→ Diaspora**

A pattern of covenant, human weakness and betrayal, punishment and God's faithfulness.

Who was Moses?

Saved as a baby in the Nile and raised in Pharaoh's palace. At the **burning bush** God reveals his name, 'I AM WHO I AM' (Ex 3:14). After **ten plagues** and the first **Passover,** Moses leads the Israelites through the Red Sea. At **Mount Sinai** God gives the **Ten Commandments** (Ex 20). The people break the covenant with the **golden calf** (Ex 32) and wander 40 years before reaching the Promised Land.

The Tanakh

Torah (Law): Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy. Handwritten on a scroll (*Sefer Torah*) and read in the synagogue – the holiest text.

Nevi'im (Prophets): e.g. Amos, Jeremiah – call people back to the covenant.

Ketuvim (Writings): e.g. Psalms, Proverbs, Job – poetry and wisdom.

The **Talmud** records the oral teaching that explains the Torah.

Wilderness and exile

In the Torah: the wilderness is a *punishment* (40 years after the golden calf) but also *preservation* – God feeds them with manna, guides them and dwells in the Tabernacle.

In the Prophets: Amos and Jeremiah warn that exile is the punishment for breaking the covenant, yet promise return.

Today: the Diaspora (Jews living outside Israel) – keeping the mitzvot helped Jews survive as a people without a homeland.

Key quotes

Genesis 17:10 – *"This is my covenant … every male among you shall be circumcised."*

Genesis 3:23 – *"The Lord God sent him out of the garden of Eden."*

Exodus 3:14 – *"I AM WHO I AM."*

Exodus 20:8 – *"Remember the Sabbath day, and keep it holy."*

Exodus 23:19 – *"You shall not boil a kid in its mother's milk."*

Deuteronomy 6:4 – *The Shema: "Hear, O Israel: the Lord our God, the Lord is one."*

Synagogue

Aron Hakodesh (Ark) holds the Torah scrolls · **Ner Tamid** (eternal light) · **Bimah** (reading platform).

Replaces the Tabernacle and Temple as the place of prayer; worship focuses on the Torah.

Orthodox: men and women sit separately; services in Hebrew. **Reform:** families sit together; some English; women can be rabbis.

Shabbat and kosher

Origins: God rested on the seventh day (Gen 2:2–3) and commanded rest (Ex 20:8).

Practice: candles lit before sunset, Kiddush over wine, two challah loaves, family meal, synagogue, Havdalah to close.

Orthodox avoid all 39 melachot (e.g. cooking, driving, switching on lights). **Reform** focus on rest and family; some drive to synagogue.

Pikuach nefesh: saving a life always comes first.

Food: animals that chew the cud and have split hooves; fish with fins and scales – no pork or shellfish. Meat and milk kept apart (Ex 23:19).

Clothing: no wool and linen mixed (*shatnez*); kippah and tallit/tzitzit worn by many.

Festivals: remembering Moses

Pesach (Passover): Seder meal retells the Exodus – matzah, bitter herbs (maror), charoset.

Shavuot: celebrates the giving of the Torah at Sinai.

Sukkot: families live and eat in a sukkah (hut) to remember 40 years in the wilderness.

Yom Kippur: the Day of Atonement – once held in the Tabernacle; today a 25-hour fast of prayer and repentance.

Encounter and dialogue

The Church's faith began among the people of the Old Testament: Christians and Jews share the covenant story and the Ten Commandments. The Last Supper was a Passover meal.

Greater Manchester, including Salford, has the largest Jewish community in the UK outside London. The Church condemns antisemitism in every form (*Nostra Aetate* 4).

Check your knowledge

1. Name the three parts of the Tanakh.
2. What was the sign of God's covenant with Abraham?
3. Why is the wilderness both a punishment and a preservation?
4. Explain how Orthodox and Reform Jews keep Shabbat differently.
5. Which festival remembers the giving of the Torah?