



Religious Studies

GCE A2 G589 JUDAISM

Religious Studies

Teacher Support Booklet

Version 1 September 2012



The purpose of this teacher support booklet is to provide clarity of scope for unit content in G589: A2 Judaism. It is hoped that the guide will be of particular assistance to teachers who are new to the specification. The guide itself is not exhaustive of content and teachers should refer to the specification as the primary document.

At the end of each section a list of useful books is given, and teachers are directed to chapters of relevance. Clearly, schools will have access to other resources and many teachers will have developed their own teaching materials. However, examination questions will not focus narrowly on one specific viewpoint and all relevant responses will be credited.

The concept of the Land of Israel

Candidates should understand the central importance of the Land of Israel for Jews as the Land promised by G-d to His chosen people. They should understand how settlement in the Land is an integral part of the fulfilment of the Covenant. They should be able to debate whether specific boundaries for the present day State of Israel can be derived from the biblical promises of land. They should understand how even when the Jews were dispersed, the link with the Land was never broken. They should understand how Jews living in exile have viewed the concept of the Land in eschatological terms, looking forward to the eventual return to the Land with the advent of the Messiah. They should understand how the Land had a sacramental quality for Judah Halevi, and how he gave it a significant role in his interpretation of Judaism. They should understand how Jews have always referred to Zion and the Land of Israel in their prayers, rituals and observances. They should understand how the establishment of the present day State of Israel has diminished Diaspora Judaism's sense of living in exile and encouraged significant return to the Land.

Candidates should be aware of current environmental concerns in the Land: clean water shortages, various forms of pollution, urban sprawl. They should understand the biblical teachings underpinning the Jewish tradition of stewardship of the earth's resources: creation is good; G-d has entrusted men and women with the responsibility of maintaining and sustaining the earth He has created. They should be able to discuss the implications of the biblical teachings on stewardship for Jews living in the Land today. They should understand how the biblical prescriptions concerning Shemittah and the Year of Jubilees reinforce the idea of stewardship. They should understand the attempts of secularist kibbutzim to discover a land-based community, and how religious kibbutzim seek to establish religious values in terms of the kibbutz society.

Candidates should understand how the seeds of Zionism were sown when the grieving captives left Jerusalem for Babylon (Psalm 137). They should understand Nathan Birnbaum's (1892) use of the term Zionism to describe a modern political party

for the liberation of Jews and their organisation into a state. They should understand the background to modern Zionism in the 19th century rise of racist anti-Semitism and European nationalism. They should be familiar with the work of the World Zionist Congress and Herzl's programme to obtain sovereign state rights for the Jews in Palestine (1897). They should understand the views of the cultural Zionists. They should understand how World War 1 gained international recognition for the Zionist movement, and how its objectives were supported by the British Balfour Declaration in 1917, and later in the mandate over Palestine assigned to England. They should understand how the Nazi genocide gave increased emphasis to the need for a secure independent Jewish national home, and how the establishment of the Jewish state in 1948 received United Nations support. They should understand the variety of religious Jewish responses to Zionism and the present day State of Israel, both from Jews living within the State and Jews living in the Diaspora.

Reading:

Ben-Shaul, D'vora, *The Environment in Israel* (www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/jsourc/Environment/envt2.html)
Epstein, Isidore, *Judaism* (chapters 18, 21). ISBN 0-14-020440-7
Hoffman, C.M., *Teach Yourself Judaism* (chapter 17). ISBN 978-0-340-96881-9
Kung, Hans, *Judaism* (Part Two, AIII). ISBN 0-334-02524-9



Messianic hope

Candidates should understand the word Messiah as referring to a consecrated person charged with a special mission from G-d. They should understand that after the close of the monarchy, it came to refer to a future 'Son of David', who would restore Israel's glories, ingather the scattered Jews to Israel and usher in the Kingdom of G-d. They should understand the idea of the Messianic hope in the biblical prophets: the fulfilment of G-d's Covenant with His chosen people. They should understand the idea of Messianic hope in the books of Isaiah and Malachi. They should understand Maimonides' teaching concerning the Messiah, including the belief in the non-miraculous nature of the Messianic era. They should have knowledge of Maimonides' twelfth Principle of Faith. They should understand the ways in which Messianic hope is interpreted by Orthodox and Progressive groups today, including the belief of Religious Zionists that the establishment of the State of Israel marks the dawn of the Messianic era ('the beginning of the sprouting of our redemption').

Candidates should understand the biblical teachings about life after death, including the concept of Sheol and the belief in the resurrection of the dead. They should be aware that belief in the resurrection of the dead is Maimonides' thirteenth Principle of Faith. They should understand Maimonides' teaching that bodily resurrection is for a time, but the soul lives on forever. They should understand Jewish teachings concerning the World to Come, including the belief that the righteous will be rewarded and the wicked punished. They should understand the equation of the World to Come with the Messianic era, and the belief that the resurrection of the dead will take place after the Messiah has appeared. They should understand Rabbi Jacob's teaching that this world is like an ante-chamber before the World to Come (Sayings of the Fathers, 4.21), and the importance of leading a righteous life in this world. They should understand Reform's acceptance of the belief in the immortality of the soul, and its rejection of concepts of resurrection, hell and paradise (Pittsburgh Platform).

Reading:

Cohn-Sherbok, Dan, *Judaism* (chapter 21). ISBN 0-415-21164-6
Jacobs, Louis, *A Jewish Theology* (chapters 22-23). ISBN 0-874-41226-9

Jacobs, Louis, *Principles of the Jewish Faith* (chapters 13-14). ISBN 0-87668-871-7

Unterman, Alan, *The Jews: their Religious Beliefs and Practices* (chapter 2). ISBN 1-898723-41-9

The twentieth-century Holocaust; post-Holocaust theology

Candidates should understand the Holocaust as the systematic destruction of 6 million Jews in Germany and the territories occupied by the Nazi Party (1933-1945). They should have knowledge of the reasons for the rise of Hitler and Nazism: Germany's defeat in WWI, the harsh treaties imposed upon Germany and the defeated nations, the resultant economic shambles in Germany. They should be aware of Hitler's movement of national regeneration with its negative impulse of the Jew as hate-figure and threat. They should be familiar with the racist ideology of Nazism, including the belief in the superiority of Aryan societies provided that they remain racially pure. They should be aware of Hitler's conception of the Jew as a 'bacillus' in the national blood, and how this notion prepared the way for mass murder. They should have knowledge of the Nazi campaign of terror against the Jews, including the introduction of the Nuremberg Race Laws. They should be aware of the impact of Nazi ideologies on the Western racist-consciousness outside Germany.

Candidates should be aware of anti-Jewish attitudes in Christian teaching and legislation, and its effects in fuelling modern anti-Semitism: the depiction of Jews as 'Christ-killers', the blood libel, the distinguishing yellow badge, the consignment of Jews to ghettos, restrictions placed on Jewish trade and business dealings. They should be aware of the development of racial anti-Semitism in 19th century Europe, and the conception that the Jews belonged to a distinct 'Semitic' race. They should have knowledge of The Protocols of the Elders of Zion (1903), with its claim of an international Jewish conspiracy for world domination. They should be aware of the increase of anti-Semitism post-Holocaust: the comparison of Zionist ideologies with Nazi ideologies; instances where the Arab-Israeli conflict has encouraged anti-Semitic propaganda; modern conspiracy theories such as those suggesting that Jews were responsible for the 9/11 terrorist attacks.

Candidates should understand the effects of the Holocaust on world Jewry: the demographic effects on European Jewish communities and its impact on the great centres of Jewish learning and culture; the physical and psychosocial effects of the atrocities on survivors and their families; the impact of the Holocaust on Jewish identity; the connection between the Holocaust and the establishment of the State of Israel (as guarantor of Jewish survival); the need to remember and teach the Holocaust; the importance of Yom Hashoah; the effects of the Holocaust on Jewish-Christian relations. They should



have knowledge of the particular theology which has resulted from the Holocaust, including the responses of Orthodox and Progressive Jewish theologians.

Reading:

Close, Brian E., *Judaism: A Student's Approach* (chapters 8, 10). ISBN 0-340-54693-X

Cohn-Sherbok, Dan, *Holocaust Theology*. ISBN 0-551-01829-1

Hoffman, C.M., *Teach Yourself Judaism* (chapter 16).

Wistrich, Robert S., *Antisemitism: The Longest Hatred* (chapters 1-8, 18). ISBN 0-413-65320-X

Orthodox, Neo-Orthodoxy, Conservative, Reform, Progressive and Liberal; Hasidic Jews

Candidates should have knowledge of the origins and organization of the groups as they are represented in the United Kingdom. They should understand the distinctive beliefs, worship, customs and identity of the groups, including the respective approaches to the Written and Oral Torah. They should be able to discuss how members of the groups connect with the core beliefs and practices of the group in contemporary society.

Ashkenazi and Sephardi Jews

Candidates should have knowledge of the general origins of these two major branches of Judaism. They should understand whether Ashkenazim and Sephardim affirm the same principles of Judaism, follow the same Jewish laws, use the same liturgical rites, share the same religious customs. They should be able to discuss whether either community has been more receptive to the challenges of modernity. They should understand the attitude of the two groups to Zionism and the establishment of the State of Israel. They should be able to discuss whether the differences between Ashkenazim and Sephardim are still a factor in Jewish religious life today.

Candidates should be aware of the range of factors contributing to Jewish identity in the modern world: biological origin (Orthodox and Progressive teachings concerning who is a Jew); religious affiliation; membership of the Jewish community (both the Jewish community as a whole and the community of Jews in a particular locality); language (the use of Hebrew and Yiddish); ethnic belonging. They should be aware of the

importance of the Haskalah, anti-Semitism and the Holocaust, and the establishment of the present day State of Israel for contemporary Jewish identity. They should be able to discuss whether observance of the traditional Jewish piety plays the central role in defining and maintaining Jewish identity in the 21st century, and whether living in Western liberal democracies threatens Jewish identity.

Reading:

BBC – *Religions – Judaism relevant subdivisions* (www.bbc.co.uk/religion/religions/judaism)

Hoffman, C.M., *Teach Yourself Judaism* (chapters 4-5).

Solomon, Norman, *Judaism: A Very Short Introduction* (chapter 1). ISBN 978-0-19-285390-5

Unterman, Alan, *The Jews: their Religious Beliefs and Practices* (chapters 5,12).

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Telephone 01223 553998

Facsimile 01223 552627

Email general.qualifications@ocr.org.uk

