



Key Vocabulary

Judaism: one of the oldest monotheistic (belief in one god) religions

Jew: person who can trace their ancestry back to through the ancient people of Israel to Abraham

Torah: means 'teaching'. The Torah Scrolls contain the first 5 books of the Hebrew Bible

Sabbath: a day of religious observation from Friday evening to Saturday evening

Synagogue: Jewish place of worship

Rabbi: a teacher of Jewish law, or religious leader

Law: a system of rules

Moses: the most important Jewish prophet. He received the 10 commandments from God and led the Israelites out of Egypt

Hebrew: language spoken by the descendants of Abraham

Mezuzah: a parchment inscribed with religious texts attached to the doorpost in Jewish homes



Torah

The **Torah** is the law of God as revealed to **Moses**. It contains the first 5 books of the **Hebrew Bible** and it teaches **Jews** what God is like and how to live their lives.

Jewish people treat the **Torah** with great respect and it is read each week in the **synagogue**. The **Torah** is written in **Hebrew**, by hand, onto a parchment scroll and kept in a decorated case. A special pointer, called a **yad**, is used to follow the text.

Over one year, the whole **Torah** is read and celebrated on the Jewish holiday of **Simchat Torah**. This marks the annual cycle of public reading of the **Torah**.

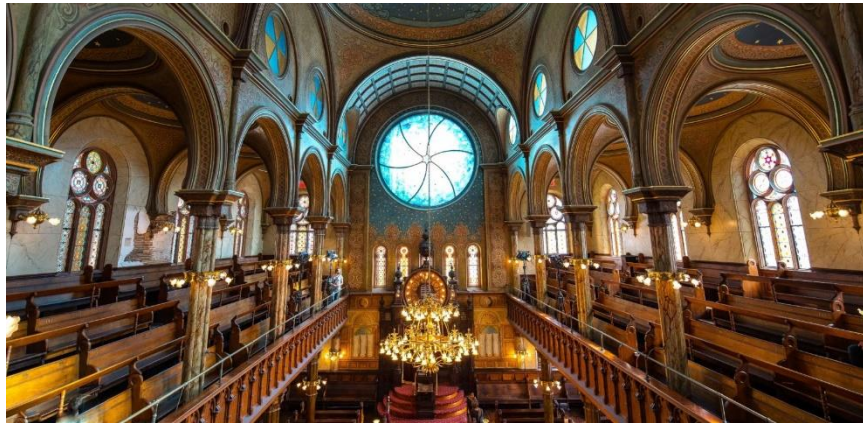
The synagogue

Jews meet in a **synagogue** for religious worship and instruction.

Inside a **synagogue**, you will find an ark, where the **Torah** scrolls are kept, an eternal light and a bimah, a platform from where the **Torah** is read.

Jewish people go to the **synagogue** to worship and to study. They are community buildings where Jewish people can go to meet each other and take part in different events. When they are in the **synagogue**, they can feel closer to God and to each other.

Religious services are led by a **rabbi**.



The Sabbath

Sabbath is the fourth commandment, 'You shall remember to keep the **Sabbath** day Holy'. It remembers the seventh day when God rested after creating the world.

It takes place every Friday evening at sunset and ends on Saturday evening. During **Sabbath**, Jewish people are not allowed to work or even do homework!

On Friday evening they celebrate with a special meal. They have two loaves of Challah bread, wine shared in a Kiddush cup and light **Sabbath** candles. Special blessings are recited and songs are sung. The families will visit the **synagogue** during **Sabbath**.