

## The Afterlife:

- Orthodox and Reform beliefs about life after death, judgement , resurrection and immortality
- Focus on this life as a preparation for the next life

## Key Concepts:

Covenant	A promise or agreement between God and the Jews	Shabbat	Day of rest for Jews from Friday to Saturday sunset
Shekhinah	Place where God's presence rests and can be felt	Kosher	Foods and practices allowed
Messiah	Anointed one who will bring about a new age for mankind	Synagogue	Place of worship and learning for Jews
Mitzvot	Duties or commandments	Torah	The five books of the Tenakh

## Exam Practice:

- Describe different Jewish beliefs about resurrection. (5)
- 'Belief in the afterlife is not important in Judaism' Discuss this statement showing that you have considered more than one point of view. (15)

## Key Sources of Authority:

- In the Torah there are no direct references to the afterlife. Some Jews interpret references to Sheol but the nature of this place is unclear.
- 'This world is like a lobby before the Olam Ha-Ba. Prepare yourself in the lobby so that you may enter the banquet hall.' Talmud
- Maimonides in his 13 Principles of Judaism refers to the resurrection of the dead one day but puts it in the context of the Messianic age.

## Key Beliefs:

Beliefs about life after death	The afterlife is often called <b>olam ha ba</b> (the world to come). There are no direct references to the nature of an afterlife in the <b>Torah</b> , but there are different beliefs and interpretations. Some Jews believe there is a life after death and other Jews believe that what lives on is how you remember the person for the good deeds they have done in their life. For most Jews their concern is not what happens after death but what good they do while alive.
Beliefs about judgement	<b>God</b> is believed to judge according to how humans have followed the right or wrong inclination and kept the <b>mitzvot</b> . <b>Rosh Hashanah</b> is sometimes called <b>Day of Judgement</b> as Jews think about their deeds over the last year. <b>God</b> is a God of <b>justice</b> and <b>mercy</b> and is a judge of how the duties of the <b>Torah</b> are followed. At the festival of <b>Rosh Hashanah God</b> judges every person. God's ways may not be understandable but they are considered to be just.
Beliefs about resurrection and immortality	There are many different beliefs about resurrection. <b>Orthodox</b> Jews refer to <b>resurrection</b> daily in their <b>prayers</b> and at <b>funerals</b> . For some this is a bodily and <b>soul resurrection</b> and for others just a <b>soul resurrection</b> . The references to resurrection have been taken out of the <b>prayer books (siddur)</b> for <b>Reform</b> Judaism and a belief in <b>resurrection</b> either bodily or through the <b>soul</b> has been rejected.
Beliefs about this life as a preparation for the next life	Most Jews consider it more important to focus on living a good life on earth and not to try and understand the ways of <b>God</b> . Preparation comes from studying the <b>Torah</b> and carrying out the <b>mitzvot</b> . In the <b>Talmud</b> this life was described as a 'lobby' or entrance hall where you should prepare yourself for the world to come.

## Key Connections:

- How do beliefs about life after death relate to *keeping the mitzvot*?
- How do beliefs about judgment relate to the *festival of Rosh Hashanah*?
- How do beliefs about the afterlife relate to *life on earth*?