



Cogan Scholars Programme

Religious Education
Award

This document contains the syllabus for the Cogan Scholars: RE Award.

You will need to decide **which** religion you are going to study. All the information needed will be in the booklet here.

Miss McLoughlin can help you develop the study skills you need in order to memorise, retain and recall this information.

Once you are confident you can recall this syllabus let Miss McLoughlin know and she will arrange for you to take your undergraduate test.

Once you have passed you will receive a badge and be known as an Cogan Scholar!

Christianity

Jesus Christianity

This module will
focus on
Christianity.



Jesus: The Key Figure in Christianity

Jesus Christ is the most important person in the **Christian faith**. Christians believe that he is the **Son of God** and that through his life, death and resurrection, he made it possible for people to be forgiven and to have a close relationship with God.

Christianity is the **world's largest religion**, with around **2.2 billion followers** across the globe. Christians believe that Jesus is the **Messiah** (meaning "the chosen one") promised in the Old Testament of the Bible, and that he came to bring peace, hope and salvation to the world.

When Was Jesus Born?

Jesus was born over 2,000 years ago, most likely between **7 and 3 BC** (Before Christ). His birth is celebrated by Christians every year on **25th December**, at **Christmas**. He was born in **Bethlehem** to **Mary** and **Joseph**, though Christians believe that **God is his true Father**, and that his birth was a miracle.

Christmas: Celebrating the Birth of Jesus

Christians celebrate **Christmas** every year on **25th December** to remember the **birth of Jesus Christ**, who they believe is the **Son of God**. It is a joyful and important festival, marking the moment when God came to Earth in human form — a belief known as the **Incarnation**.

The Nativity Story

According to the **Bible**, Jesus was born over 2,000 years ago in a small town called **Bethlehem**, in the land now known as Israel. His mother was **Mary**, a young woman who was engaged to **Joseph**, a carpenter. Christians believe that Jesus was not Joseph's biological son, but that **Mary became pregnant through the Holy Spirit**, meaning that **God is Jesus' true Father**.

The angel Gabriel visited Mary to give her this message. In the Gospel of Luke, the angel says:

“Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favour with God. You will conceive and give birth to a son, and you are to call him Jesus.”
— Luke 1:30–31 (NIVUK)

Because there was no room in the inns in Bethlehem, Mary and Joseph had to stay in a **stable**, and Jesus was born. Mary laid him in a **manger** (an animal feeding trough) because there was no proper bed. This humble beginning is remembered in **Nativity plays** and Christmas cards around the world.

Why Jesus' Birth Matters to Christians

Christians believe that Jesus' birth was the beginning of **God's plan to save the world**. Jesus grew up to teach people about God's love, forgive sins, and bring peace. His birth is seen as a gift of hope to the world.

The Gospel of John explains it like this:

“The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us.”
— John 1:14 (NIVUK)

This means that God came to live among people in the form of Jesus.

The Gospels and Jesus' Life

Most of what Christians know about Jesus' life is found in the **four Gospels** – **Matthew, Mark, Luke** and **John**, which are in the **New Testament** of the **Bible**, the Christian holy book. These Gospels tell stories about Jesus' life, including:

- His birth and childhood
- His baptism
- His teachings (like the Sermon on the Mount)
- His miracles (such as healing the sick and feeding the 5,000)
- His death on the cross (Good Friday)
- His resurrection (Easter Sunday)

Christians remember the death and resurrection of Jesus during the Easter season, which is the most important time in the Christian calendar.

Good Friday is the day Christians reflect on the suffering and death of Jesus Christ. According to the Bible, Jesus was arrested, falsely accused, and sentenced to death by crucifixion — a brutal form of execution used by the Romans. He was nailed to a wooden cross and left to die. Christians believe that Jesus, who is the Son of God, willingly gave up his life to take the punishment for the sins of all humanity. His sacrifice restored in their relationship with God.

After Jesus died, his body was taken down from the cross and placed in a tomb. A large stone was rolled in front of the entrance, and guards were posted to watch it.

Easter Sunday is the joyful celebration of Jesus' resurrection. Christians believe that on the third day after his death, Jesus rose from the dead, just as he had predicted. The Bible says that some of Jesus' followers, including women like Mary Magdalene, went to the tomb and found it empty. Later, Jesus appeared to his disciples and many others, showing that he was truly alive.

This event, called the **resurrection**, is central to the Christian faith. It gives hope that death is not the end, and that those who believe in Jesus can also receive eternal life. Christians believe that through Jesus' death and resurrection, the power of sin and death was broken, and anyone who trusts in him can be forgiven and live in a close relationship with God now and forever.

Many Christians attend special church services during Holy Week, which includes **Palm Sunday** (when Jesus entered Jerusalem), **Maundy Thursday** (when Jesus shared the Last Supper with his disciples), **Good Friday**, and **Easter Sunday**. Some may also take part in Easter traditions such as singing hymns, reading from the Bible, taking communion, and celebrating with family and friends.

Church Colours During Easter and Lent

In many Christian churches, different colours are used throughout the year to show the different seasons in the **liturgical calendar** (the Christian year). These colours help to express the mood and meaning of each season. Here are the main colours used around Easter:

Purple – Lent

- Purple is the main colour used during **Lent**, the 40-day period leading up to Easter (not counting Sundays).
- Lent is a time of **reflection, repentance** , and preparation for Easter. Purple symbolises **penance** , **sorrow for sin** , and the **royalty of Christ** as King.
- In many churches, the altar is covered with purple cloths, and priests or ministers may wear purple vestments.

Red – Holy Week and Good Friday

- **Red** is sometimes used on **Palm Sunday** , which remembers Jesus' triumphal entry into Jerusalem, and also on **Good Friday** , the day of Jesus' crucifixion.
- Red symbolises **suffering, sacrifice** , and the **blood of Jesus** , as well as the **fire of the Holy Spirit** .
- On Good Friday

Fascinating Fact: Jesus on the Moon!

Did you know that **Jesus was remembered on the Moon** ?

During the historic **Apollo 11 mission** in **1969**, when astronauts first landed on the Moon, something very special happened that not everyone knows about. Just before stepping onto the Moon's surface, astronaut **Buzz Aldrin**, who was a Christian, took a moment to **read from the Bible** and celebrate **Holy Communion** inside the lunar module.

Holy Communion is a Christian practice where believers eat a small piece of bread and drink a little wine (or juice) to **remember Jesus' death and resurrection**, just as he taught his followers at the **Last Supper**.

Buzz Aldrin brought a small **silver cup**, some bread, and wine with him, which had been blessed by his church. While sitting quietly in the spacecraft, he read these words of Jesus:

"I am the vine, you are the branches. If you remain in me and I in you, you will bear much fruit."

— John 15:5 (NIVUK)

He then gave thanks to God and shared communion, all while sitting **on the surface of the Moon** !

Buzz Aldrin later said that he felt it was important to remember that they had not just travelled through space with science and technology, but also **with faith**. It was his way of thanking God for the incredible achievement and asking for peace and guidance.

So, the very first meal ever eaten on the Moon was not space food — it was a **Christian communion**, to remember **Jesus** !

The Life of Jesus

Jesus was born in **Bethlehem** over 2,000 years ago. His mother was **Mary**. Christians believe that **God is his true Father**.

"The Holy Spirit will come upon you... So the holy one to be born will be called the Son of God."

— Luke 1:35 (NIVUK)

He grew up in **Nazareth**, and at around the age of 30, he began travelling, teaching, and performing miracles.

Some things Jesus did:

- He **healed the sick**
- He **fed the hungry** (e.g. feeding 5,000 people with five loaves and two fish)
- He **calmed storms**
- He told parables like the **Good Samaritan** and the **Lost Sheep**

"Love your neighbour as yourself."

— Matthew 22:39 (NIVUK)

Jesus' Teachings

Jesus taught that the most important commandments are:

"Love the Lord your God with all your heart... and love your neighbour as yourself."

— Matthew 22:37–39 (NIVUK)

He also taught forgiveness, kindness, and humility:

"Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God."

— Matthew 5:9 (NIVUK)

The Bible: God's Special Book for Christians

The **Bible** is the most important book for Christians. It is considered **God's word** and contains everything Christians need to know about God, Jesus, and how to live a good life.

The Bible is made up of **two main parts** :

1. The Old Testament

- The Old Testament was written **before Jesus was born** .
- It tells the story of how God created the world, made a special agreement with the people of Israel (called a **covenant**), and sent prophets to teach about God.
- It includes famous stories like:
 - **Creation** – how God made the world (Genesis)
 - **Noah's Ark** – God's promise never to flood the whole earth again
 - **Moses and the Ten Commandments** – rules God gave to help people live well
 - **David and Goliath** – a story of bravery and faith
- Many Old Testament books are poetry, laws, history, and messages from prophets who reminded people to follow God.

2. The New Testament

- The New Testament tells the story of **Jesus' life, death, and resurrection** .
- It contains **27 books** , including the four **Gospels** – Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John. These four books are the main sources about Jesus' life and teaching.
- It also includes:
 - **The Acts of the Apostles** – about the first Christians and how they spread Jesus' message
 - **Letters (Epistles)** – written by early church leaders like Paul to teach Christians how to live
 - **The Book of Revelation** – a special book about the future and God's final victory over evil

Why is the Bible Important?

- Christians believe the Bible is **inspired by God** – that God helped the people who wrote it to tell the truth.
- The Bible teaches Christians how to **love God and others** , how to forgive, and how to live in peace.
- It helps Christians understand God's promises and the story of salvation through Jesus.

Judaism & Christianity

The Ten Commandments

This module will focus on

The

ments



Judaism and Christianity
are two of the world's
oldest religions, and they
are closely connected
because they both believe
in the same one God — the
God of Abraham.

What is Judaism?

- Judaism is the religion of the Jewish people.
- It started thousands of years ago and is the religion in which Jesus and his family were raised.
- The Jewish holy book is called the Tanakh (which includes the same books as the Christian Old Testament but arranged differently).
- Jewish people follow laws and traditions taught by God through the prophets, including Moses.

What is Christianity?

- Christianity began after Jesus' life and teachings.
- Christians believe Jesus is the promised Messiah and the Son of God.
- Christians use the Bible, which includes the Old Testament (shared with Judaism) and the New Testament (about Jesus and the early Church).

Judaism and Christianity: Connected Religions

Christianity and **Judaism** are two of the world's oldest religions, and they are closely connected.

- **Judaism** is the religion of the Jewish people. It began thousands of years ago with the covenant between God and Abraham, and later with Moses.
- **Christianity** started from Judaism. Jesus himself was Jewish, and the first Christians were Jewish people who believed Jesus was the promised Messiah.

The Ten Commandments in Judaism and Christianity

One of the most important connections between these religions is the **Ten Commandments** .

- The Ten Commandments are **rules given by God to Moses** on Mount Sinai, written on stone tablets.
- They are found in the **Old Testament** of the Christian Bible and the **Torah** (the first five books of the Hebrew Bible) in Judaism.

What Are the Ten Commandments?

The Ten Commandments teach people how to live good and holy lives. They include rules like:

1. You shall have no other gods but me.
2. You shall not make or worship any idols.
3. You shall not misuse the name of the Lord your God.
4. You shall remember and keep the Sabbath day holy.
5. Respect your father and mother.
6. You must not murder.
7. You must not take someone else's husband or wife.
8. You must not steal.
9. You must not lie.
10. You must not be envious.

Fascinating fact: Many countries' laws are based on the Ten Commandments.

The Ten Commandments in Judaism

Jewish people believe they are **God's chosen people** , which means they have a special relationship with God. Because of this, they try to live as a good example to the rest of the world by following God's rules for living.

One of the most important parts of their faith is the **Ten Commandments** (also called the **Ten Sayings**). These are rules that God gave to Moses on **two stone tablets** on **Mount Sinai** .

These commandments guide Jewish people in how to behave, how to respect God, and how to treat other people. They are the foundation for Jewish law and everyday life.

The Original Language and Scriptures

The Ten Commandments were originally written in **Hebrew** , which is the traditional language of the Jewish people. The story of Moses receiving the commandments is told in the **Torah** , the most important Jewish holy book, especially in the book called **Exodus** (Chapter 20).

This same story is also found in the **Christian Bible** , showing how Judaism and Christianity share a connection.

Jewish Beliefs About the Ten Commandments

Jewish people have a close relationship with God and live good lives. They believe it is their duty to set a good example for others by obeying God's laws.

Bible and Torah Quotes

Here are some important words from the Torah (also in the Christian Old Testament) about the Ten Commandments:

"I am the Lord your God, who brought you out of Egypt, out of the land of slavery. You shall have no other gods before me."

— Exodus 20:2-3 (NIVUK)

"Remember the Sabbath day by keeping it holy."

— Exodus 20:8 (NIVUK)

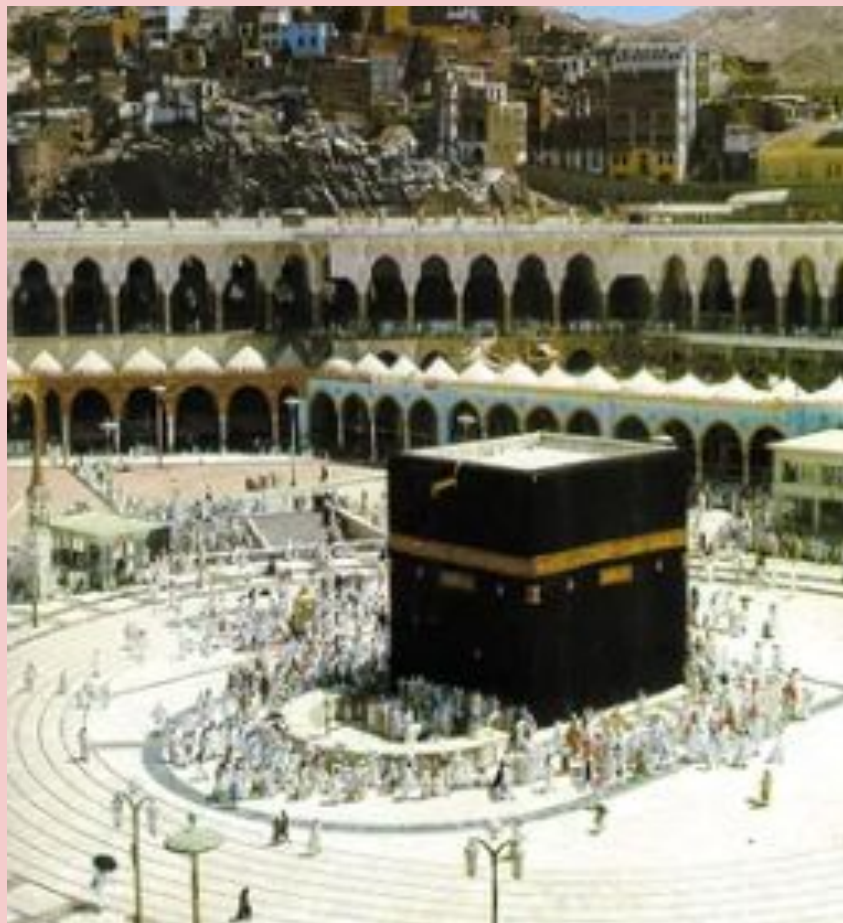
Why Is This Important?

The Ten Commandments are important because they teach people how to live in a way that pleases God. For Jewish people, obeying these rules is a way of showing their love and respect for God and helping create a fair and kind community.

Islam

The Kaaba

This module will focus on
The Kaaba



The Kaaba is a cube-shaped building in the centre of the Great Mosque (Masjid al-Haram) in Makkah, Saudi Arabia, where the Prophet Muhammad was born.

Muslims believe that Islam has always existed, but that it was fully revealed about 1,400 years ago when the Prophet Muhammad was visited by the Angel Gabriel in Arabia.

Muslims believe that the Kaaba is the holiest place on earth and that it was originally built by the Prophet Ibrahim (Abraham) and his son Ismail (Ishmael) as a house of monotheistic worship. All Muslims face the direction of the Kaaba — called the Qibla — when they pray five times each day.

The Kaaba is there to unite Muslims in worship of God (Allah) and serves as a powerful symbol of unity and equality, not as something to be worshipped itself.

This means:

- The Kaaba is *not* an idol or a god.
- Muslims do *not* worship the Kaaba — they worship God (Allah) *alone*.
- The Kaaba's purpose is to bring all Muslims together in one direction when they pray, showing that everyone is equal before God, no matter where they are from.

So, the idea is: the Kaaba is a symbol that unites Muslims, but it is *not* an object of worship itself. Muslims worship Allah, not the building.



The Kaaba is covered with a black cloth called the **Kiswah** . This cloth is replaced every year and is decorated with words from the Qur'an (the Muslim holy book) in gold and silver thread.

When Muslims go on pilgrimage to Makkah — a special journey called the **Hajj** — they walk around the Kaaba seven times in a circle. This is called **Tawaf** and shows that all Muslims are equal before God (Allah) and worship Him together.

The Hajj is one of the **Five Pillars of Islam** . These are the five most important duties that every Muslim tries to follow:

1. **Shahadah** — believing and saying that there is no god except Allah, and Muhammad is His messenger.
2. **Salah** — praying five times a day, always facing the Kaaba in Makkah.
3. **Zakah** — giving money to help the poor and people in need.
4. **Sawm** — fasting during the month of Ramadan. Muslims do not eat or drink during daylight hours to learn self-control and to think of others who have less.
5. **Hajj** — travelling to Makkah at least once in a lifetime, if they can afford it and are healthy enough.

During Hajj, many Muslims try to kiss or touch the **Black Stone** , which is set in one corner of the Kaaba. It is thought to be very old and some believe it goes all the way back to the time of Adam and Eve, who Muslims believe were the first humans.

Millions of Muslims from all around the world visit the Kaaba every year. When they stand together, they wear simple white clothes to show that everyone is equal — rich or poor, young or old.

Muslims do not worship the Kaaba or the Black Stone — they only worship Allah. The Kaaba helps bring Muslims together, facing one direction, so they feel united wherever they are in the world.