

UNIVERSITY OF MALTA
FACULTY OF THEOLOGY
JANUARY/FEBRUARY 2012 EXAMINATIONS SESSION

THL1570/THL1560 – Introduction to Judaism

Monday, 23rd January 2012

Time: 8.00 – 9.00am

Please give a brief and to the point answer to eight of these questions.

1. Why is Nehemiah 8 considered as being a Biblical text that frequently indicates the birth of Judaism?
2. Judaism believes in a personal God who is given names and has specific characteristics in Hebrew Scriptures: explain one name and one characteristic.
3. What is the *Shema Israel* and why is it considered as not only being a prayer but also a profession of faith?
4. Judaism believes in a Written and Oral Law: describe briefly and indicate the difference.
5. How is the Jewish *Torah* divided?
6. What are the *Mishnah* and the *Talmud*?
→ Mishnah ←
7. The concept of the Messiah is fundamental to Judaism. How is this concept differently understood nowadays between the Orthodox Jews and more modern expressions of Judaism.
8. Theodor Herzl founded the Zionistic movement? What were his aims?
9. Hasidim, Orthodox Judaism, Conservative and Reform Judaism: what essentially unites and divides the different movements in Judaism?
10. Briefly indicate the common features of any synagogue. What is a Torah 'portion'? benach
11. Indicate the scriptural reasons why Sabbath is celebrated and describe briefly the domestic ritual that initiates and ends the Sabbath.
12. The Jewish Calendar is lunar: what is the practical consequence when speaking of the Jewish Festivals.
13. Why is *Yom Kippur* considered so sacred among believers in Judaism?
14. Why is the Passover nowadays considered as being a 'domestic' celebration?
15. Why is the Vatican Council II decree *Nostra Aetate* considered as being a milestone in Christian-Jewish relations?