

# PRAYERS AND SERVICES

## NEED TO KNOW

Prayer is a way of communicating with God: to give thanks, ask for help, seek forgiveness, and praise Him. Daily prayers are an obligation in Judaism.

### Key prayers:

**Shema (Deuteronomy 6:4–9)** – Declares belief in one God.

**Amidah** – Central prayer of praise, request, and thanks.

**Kaddish** – Praise of God, often associated with mourning.

**Modeh Ani** – Morning prayer expressing gratitude for life.

### Orthodox services:

Prayers always in Hebrew.

Men and women sit separately.

Longer, stricter structure.

Led by a male rabbi or cantor.

### Reform services:

Some prayers in local language.

Men and women sit together.

Shorter, more flexible.

Women can be rabbis and lead prayers.

### Role of prayer in Jewish life today:

Daily prayers (Shacharit, Mincha, Maariv).

Synagogue prayers on Shabbat and festivals.

Life events (weddings, funerals, Bar/Bat Mitzvahs).

Communal prayer strengthens Jewish identity.

### What the examiner is looking for

Clear definition of the purpose of prayer: praise, thanks, guidance, forgiveness, identity.

Explanation of the **different types of prayer** – not just listing them.

Direct references to **Jewish texts**:

Deuteronomy 6:4–9 – “Hear O Israel, the Lord our God, the Lord is One.”

Psalms 55:17 – “Evening, morning, and noon I cry out in distress, and He hears my voice.”

Talmud (Berakhot 26b) – Prayer replaces Temple sacrifices.

Ability to explain differences between **Orthodox and Reform** services.

Linking prayer to **modern Jewish life** (daily routines, synagogue worship, life events, community identity).