



## Good morning year 5

As inquisitive learners we will be theologians and philosophers. We will ask important questions. We may not find the answers. We will grow our knowledge of the beliefs and traditions of religions worldwide. We will grapple with big questions about the mysteries of life. We will wonder.



Tuesday 2nd March 2021

Inquistive number of the day is 2005

We have thought about what makes buildings and place sacred  
but what makes a text or book sacred?


What ideas do you have?

# You will now the names of the sacred texts for major religions but how much do you know about them?

**Hinduism**

**Hinduism** originated over 4000 years ago in India. Hindus believe that we all have a soul that lives again and again trying to become perfect (a state called *Brahman*), and that we can be reborn as a person, an animal or a plant (*reincarnation*). They believe that our present lives depend on how we have behaved in past lives (*karma*).

Hinduism has many holy books, called the **Vedas** (*knowledge*), containing *mantras* or repeated prayers which may be chanted or written. As the religion is so old, many different schools of practice have developed and some groups, like Buddhists and Sikhs, have become new religions in themselves, no longer believing in the authority of the Vedas.



**SCHOLASTIC**

**Christianity**

**Christianity** was founded by Jesus Christ, a Jew (0-33CE) living in what is now called Israel, and is based on the idea of loving God and one's neighbour as much as oneself in order to go to Heaven. Jesus was executed by the Romans but his followers spread the word of his beliefs around the world.

The main Christian holy books are the four gospels (*good news*) of the New Testament of the **Bible**. These mostly describe the last few years of the life of Jesus and were written by Mark, Luke, Matthew and John between 60-100CE.




**Islam**

**Islam** began with the teachings of prophet Muhammad (570-632CE), an Arab leader who lived in Mecca and Medina. The word *Islam* means *submission*, or the total surrender of oneself to one God who is beyond understanding.

Muslims believe that the angel Gabriel revealed God's truth to Muhammad and his followers wrote it down in the **Koran** or **Qur'an**, comprising 114 chapters (*suras*), containing 6,236 verses. The earlier *suras*, revealed at Mecca, cover ethical and spiritual topics. The later *suras*, from Medina, discuss social and moral issues.

Islam has a second Holy Book, the **Hadith** or the **Life of Muhammad**, which is used to seek examples when judging people's behaviour in Muslim courts.




## Sacred texts

by David Clayton

**Buddhism**

**Buddhism** was founded by Siddhartha Gautama (Buddha or 'enlightened one'), an Indian prince (563-483BCE) and is based on the idea that we live again and again until our behaviour reaches a state of perfection or *nirvana* (endless happiness).


Buddhist holy books are the **Pali Canon** in three collections: two about living according to the teachings of the Buddha and one, the **Sutta Pitaka**, containing more than 10,000 of his sayings and discussions.



**Sikhism**

**Sikhism** was founded by Guru Nanak Dev (1469-1538CE). Born a Hindu, he noticed that religion led to trouble between Hindus and Muslims so he started his own 'path to God'. He believed in karma and the transmigration of souls, but not in Paradise and Hell: he believed in living a balanced life to become one with God.

*Guru* means *teacher*. There were nine other teachers after Nanak Dev and their teachings, advising believers how to live, were written down in the Holy Book known as the **Guru Granth Sahib** - which became the tenth and final guru.



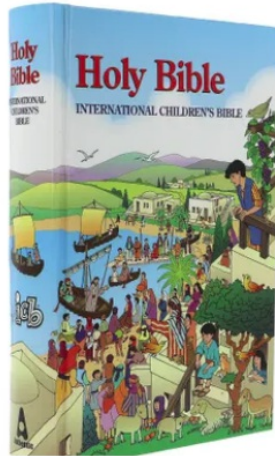
**Judaism**

**Judaism** followers, called Jews, believe in a single, personal God who chose them to set an example of holiness and ethical behaviour to the world. Their main holy book is the **Tanakh**, formed of three parts. The **Torah** (*the Law*) is the first five books of the Old Testament (as Christians call it), containing 614 commandments. It was thought to have been written by Moses but scholars now date it some 800 years later. The **Nevi'im** (*the Prophets*) has four books about early prophets and 15 about later prophets. The **Ketuvim** has 11 books of writings, starting with the Psalms.





Today you are going begin by thinking about four sacred text or books.



For each book you are going to think about these questions and add you ideas on a post it note.

What do you already know?

Which words do you associate with the text?

What big questions would you ask an expert? ( Who could we ask?)

What do you think people learn from the text?

We can also write down the ideas of people at home.

Torah

Bible

Quran

Guru Grant Sahib



What has surprised you?

## Christianity

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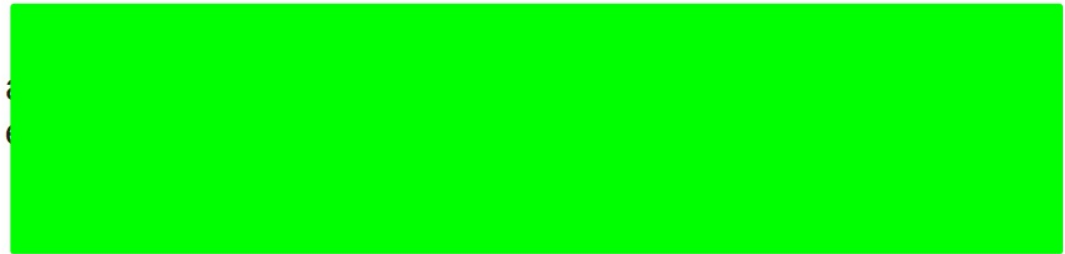


Has anything confused you?

What might people learn from sacred texts?

People say that texts may be used to give:

guidance



strength



comfort



inspiration

What do these words mean?

We are going to investigate the story of Esther. It is found both in the bible and in the torah. It is an important story for Judaism and is featured in the festival of Purim. ( we will explore this later)

While you watch the video see if you spot anything you think gives guidance, strength, inspiration or comfort.

Close your eyes and listen while I describe a character you will meet.

*Close your eyes and try to picture the character I'm going to describe - he's a character we're going to meet shortly in a story. His name is Haman. And Haman is not a good person. He's a brute who always tried to get his own way. He would laugh at people less fortunate than himself. If anyone ever looked like they might outshine him in anything...he would trick them, or the people in charge, to make sure that they lost and he always won. He wanted to hurt anyone that wasn't on his side. He was a bully.*

*There was a big problem however. Haman worked for the King, and the King trusted him. So now we're going to watch a short video showing a story from the Bible about Haman. It shows how he finally met someone who risked everything to stand up for what was right...a young woman called Esther.*

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/teach/school-radio/assemblies-ks1-ks2-esther-mordecai-haman-purim/zsfq8hv>

What do you think may be learnt from the story?



## Activity one

Many people believe there are five main concepts dealt with in sacred texts. They are truth, love, honesty, justice and unity. Do you think any of these can be found in the story of Esther.

Now read a copy of the story and see what you can find out?

In some faiths the words of a song may reflect some of these concepts. Before reading think about how some of the ideas of the story may be reflected in the song.

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/p07q3hln>

# ESTHER FOILS A PLOT

◆ Esther 1-10 ◆



**E**sther was the wife of King Xerxes, the ruler of the mighty Persian Empire. One day, her cousin Mordecai, a royal official, heard of a plot to assassinate Xerxes, so Esther told her husband. He had the two conspirators hung and wrote the matter in the royal record book.

Mordecai refused to bow down to the king's minister, Haman, because Jews do not worship any man but only our God, so Haman swore to kill not only Mordecai but every Jew in the Persian empire.

"The Jews refuse to obey you," the king said. Haman told the king, "You would command their destruction." When Mordecai heard the king's command, he was extremely distressed. He wrote a letter to Queen Esther to plead with the king on behalf of his people. "Perhaps God has put

you in this influential position for just such a desperate situation as this," he said.

Prayerfully, Esther went to King Xerxes, and when he kindly offered her anything she wanted, she held a banquet for the proud and boastful Haman, who greatly enjoyed himself.

That night, the king could not sleep and began reading about Mordecai's success in foiling the murder plot, as written in the royal record book. "What reward has this loyal man received?" he asked. He commanded the horrified Haman to lead Mordecai through the streets to be honoured.

At a second banquet for Haman, Esther bravely asked Xerxes to save the Jews from their murderous enemy. "Who is this enemy?" the king demanded, angrily. When Esther pointed to Haman, the king ordered him to be hung on the gallows that Haman had had built to hang Mordecai.

So Mordecai replaced Haman as the most powerful official in the kingdom. The king allowed the Jews to defend themselves against attack, and they celebrated God's deliverance of them through Queen Esther.



### Persian bracelet

Perhaps Esther wore jewellery like this gold bracelet with two griffins when she went to please King Xerxes. She needed to make a grand entrance, because approaching the king without his permission was an offence punishable by death.



### The scroll of Esther

The Jewish festival of Purim commemorates the story of Esther. The scroll of Esther is read out on the evening before the fast, and every time Haman's name is mentioned the people boo and hiss. It is a joyful and noisy occasion.





# The Story of Esther

There was a time when Jews lived in a country called Persia which was ruled by King Xerxes. The King had a beautiful queen named Vashti who he wished to show off to all the men in his court. Vashti refused to be shown off by the King and, full of fury at being disobeyed, he decided to find a new Queen to replace her.

Esther was a young and very beautiful Jewish orphan who had been brought up as a daughter by her cousin Mordecai. The King decided that Esther, out of all the women in his kingdom, should be his new Queen. Mordecai instructed her to not reveal that she was a Jew.

Sitting at the King's Gate one day, Mordecai overheard two palace officers plotting to kill King Xerxes. He sent a warning to King Xerxes and saved his life. Because of this, Mordecai's name was written in the Royal Record Book.

Mordecai had an enemy close to the King named Haman. Haman disliked Mordecai because he refused to bow to him whenever Haman passed by. Mordecai would only bow before God. Haman was so angry with Mordecai that he tricked the King into passing a law that on a certain date Mordecai and all the other Jews in Persia would be put to death!

It was very dangerous for Esther to approach the king without his permission, but Mordecai persuaded her she had been put close to the King by God, especially to save the Jews. Esther came up with a plan and invited the King and Haman to a banquet the next day.

Haman was impatient to have Mordecai killed before all the other Jews, so he set up a gallows and planned to ask the King the next day to have Mordecai hanged there.

That night the King could not sleep and asked to hear the Royal Record Book read aloud. Realizing Mordecai had never been rewarded for saving his life, the King the next day asked Haman, "What should be done for a man the King delights to honour?" Haman, thinking the King was talking about himself, painted a rich picture of all the honours that should be given to him.

Pleased with Haman's suggestions, the King ordered him to go and arrange all these honours for Mordecai. Mordecai was given the King's horse and robe and Haman was forced to lead him through the streets for all to see. Haman was humiliated!

Later that day, Haman and the King went to Esther's banquet. The King was so pleased with her that he agreed to grant any request she made. Esther then told the King about Haman's plot to kill her people and asked him to save them. "Hang Haman!" the King called in a fury.

And so Haman was defeated and the King passed a new law that saved the Jews from their fate. Mordecai took Haman's place as the King's favourite. God did all this through the beautiful Queen Esther.

## Activity 2

What did Esther tweet?

You are going to tell the story using tweets.

Here are some tweets from a story. Who tweeted?



Bulrushes and the  
smell of tar always  
make me think of my  
sister, my mum and  
the Princess. They're  
sweet to me!

Bush that burns &  
talks? Stick turning  
into snake? Am going  
crazy today. Actually  
I've never been saner.  
Off back to Egypt.

You've got to be  
kidding us God. Sea  
rolled back, slaves all  
safe. Egyptians all  
trying to swim home.  
Promised land here we  
come.

Remember you have limited characters for each tweet.

You need to reflect character's feelings and actions.

Think about the viewpoints of the different characters.

What might be tweeted between the actions we read about in the story?



You can re draft to make your tweets funnier, cleverer, deeper or more thoughtful.

Afternoon



As we found out earlier the story is always told at Purim.



# What is Purim?

Purim celebrates:  
freedom, the right of people, of  
whatever faith or race, to live free  
from the fear of attack.

Purim remembers:  
that not everyone in the world yet  
has that freedom.

## **Did you know:**

The word Purim means 'lots' and refers to the lottery that Haman used to choose the date for his evil plot.

# How is Purim Celebrated?



## **Synagogue celebrations**

At Purim, Jews read the Book of Esther in the synagogue.



# How is Purim Celebrated?

## **Gifts and charity**

Jews send gifts to charity.

## **Seeds**

Eating different kinds of seeds, remembers Esther eating only seeds while she lived in the King's palace.



Photo courtesy of Amy Ross (@flickr.com) - granted under creative commons licence - attribution

# Happy Purim!

Haman wasn't the first person to try to exterminate the Jews and he wasn't the last.

Jews are not the only people who have been attacked because of their religion or their race.

There are still places in the world today where people are persecuted because they are different in some way.

When the story is told people don't just sit and listen quietly.

### **Synagogue celebrations**

At Purim Jews read the story of Esther in the **synagogue**. It's usually an entertaining and rowdy occasion.

The synagogue is crowded with men, women, and children. Some wear their best Sabbath clothes, but many dress up in colourful costumes and masks.

### **Making a noise**

The Purim story features a villain called Haman, and everyone in the synagogue boos, hisses, stamps their feet and uses noisemakers (called graggers) and cymbals whenever the name of Haman is mentioned during the service.

You are going bring your story to life. Don't just read out the tweets. Can you make it rowdy and entertaining? Add sound effects. Use puppets. Maybe use animations.

celebrations can be seen here

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/newsround/39253191>

*Inquisitive story time*