**2021 Best Paper #1 Judaism- 2 examples**

**THE FIRST EXAMPLE I COPY HERE I THINK IS A REALISTIC PERFECT “PAPER #1” BECAUSE YOU ONLY HAVE 15-20 MINUTES PER QUESTION. So I think this first example is realistic written in 15-20 minutes. But it still uses key terminology, examples, and specific details of using Scripture in its ritual examples. It also has a nice thesis and conclusion!**

**HERE IS EXAMPLE #1:**

IB EXAM PAPER #1 PRACTICE

**Directions: Read the following primary document excerpt and answer the two questions:**

*“Hear, O Israel! Adonai is our God! Adonai is One!”*

**Part a): (3points) What is the significance of the above statement in Judaism?**

The statement above is from the Shema, one of the most powerful prayers recited in the Jewish services, from the Book of Deuteronomy. It consists of biblical verses that declare the unity of God and declares Israel’s commitment to God’s service. This prayer is one of the first prayers taught to children and the last prayer that one utters before death,

**Part b): (7 points) How do Jews use Holy Scripture as part of practicing their faith?**

Jews use Holy Scripture as part of practicing their faith through public readings and designated study time for the Torah during religious festivals, interpreting and translating the contents of the Holy Scriptures to apply them to their daily lives, and using the Holy Scripture as basis for their festivals and rituals.

During festivals, or chags (“sacred occasion”), Jews perform public readings of various parts of the Holy Scriptures as part of practicing their faith. For example, during the Bar and Bat Mitzvah of Jewish teenagers, the Bar or Bat Mitzvah has to prepare an excerpt of the Torah to be read aloud to his or her Jewish community. By demonstrating they can read directly from the Torah, which is written in Hebrew, and understand its contents, the Jewish children are proclaiming their intentions to enter the Jewish community as a literate adult in front of their whole Jewish congregation. These Jewish children are also often expected to conduct an analysis of the passage they read aloud to show full comprehension. During Shavuot, a pilgrimage festival that is one of the five major Jewish festivals, a public reading of the Ten Commandments occurs as this particular festival is associated with the giving of the Torah, the most ancient and holiest scripture of the Jewish faith that contains the Ten Commandments, on Mount Sinai. The Jewish practice their faith by paying homage to the original gift of the Torah from God through this reenactment of sorts. Public readings of the Book of Ruth, which details the journey of a young Moabite widow that becomes the ideal model for a Jewish convert, also occur at this festival. The entire first night of this chag is also used to study the Torah.

The concepts presented in the Holy Scriptures are also interpreted and applied to Jewish life as means to practice Judaism. Kosher meals are a great example of this. In the Torah, the people of Israel are repeatedly told that God wishes for them to be in a state of holiness, and this is interpreted as discipline of selective food consumption and careful food preparation, otherwise known as the Kosher Diet. The Jewish people interpreted being holy in terms of food consumption as following these main guidelines: any animals eaten have to be properly slaughtered by humans, fish without both fins and scales can not be consumed, insects can not be consumed, and meat and milk dishes can not be consumed simultaneously.

The Jewish people created many of their rituals and chags based on the Holy Scripture. For example, the Sabbath was inspired by the Book of Exodus and the Book of Deuteronomy. The Book of Exodus identified the Sabbath as the day on which God rested from his creative labors while The Book of Deuteronomy associates the Sabbath from the Israelites’ liberation from slavery in Egypt. Emulating historical events is a very important part of the Jewish faith as Judaism is a community faith, where all members relate to one another even across time. Another example is the major festival of the Passover, which also celebrates the liberation of the Jewish people from slavery in Egypt. When the Israelites were released from Egypt, they packed in such a hurry that the dough they brought did not have time to properly rise. Therefore, this is recreated through Jewish families ridding their houses of leveaning agents and any foods that contain them. It is important to note that the Holy Scripture is the sole reason why the Jewish are able to recreate historical Jewish events as they are the only documents that record them meticulously. In rituals, the Holy Scripture is also used in Jewish prayers. The Shema is arguably the most important Jewish prayer as it is one of the first prayers taught to Jewish children and the last prayer that is uttered before death. It contains biblical verses from the Holy Scripture and conveys the unity of God and Israel’s commitment to God’s services. In the chag of Shavuot, dishes centered around honey are also served to symbolize that when one reads the Torah, it is sweet upon the lips.

HERE IS EXAMPLE #2. THIS WOULD BE AN AMAZING PAPER #2 LONG-ESSAY ANSWER because it gives incredible specific examples and details. It also has a developed thesis and conclusion. Maybe you can’t write all this in 15-20 minutes for Paper #1, but this would be an amazing Paper #2 written in 45-60 minutes.

**EXAMPLE #2:**

**Part (a)**

* The statement above is from Shema Yisrael, it is a prayer that embodies Jewish people’s central beliefs.
* Shema Yisrael is the first section of the Scripture, when it is recited in the synagogue, Orthodox Jews articulate each word clearly while using their right hand to cover their eyes. The Shema is an essential part of many Jews life, and is often recited twice daily.
* The significance of this statement is an emphasis on monotheism, and further underlining the importance of sole worship of God.

**Part (b)**

In Judaism, the Holy Scripture is what the people of this religion read and follow inorder to live a faithful life. The Holy Scripture contains the central ideas of their faith and ways of living about life, such as rituals or important ceremonies. The three most important texts that are used as part of practicing Judaism includes the Torah, Talumd and Tanakh. The Hebrew Bible, also known as Tanakh, is the collection of 24 books of religious writings in ancient times by the Israelites. As part of Tanakh, the Torah is the first five books of the Bible that recounts the origins of humanity and Judaism and contains the basic laws of Judaism. The Talmud includes the Mishnah, written versions of Jewish oral law, and Gemara, explanations and interpretations of the Mishnah/commentary written by the Rabbis to explain the Torah. Hence, the Holy Scripture is used as part of Judaism both as a guide to discipline in daily life, as well as foundation for ritual ceremonies, which in the end all serve the purpose of leading the individual to live an ethical and conscious life.

As a way of life, Judaism shapes their life behaviors all the way from a diet of specific foods to the way husbands and wife treat each other. These practices are important in providing a sense of meaning and order and an aura of holiness in Judaism. For example, the Dietary Code, provides the Jews a strict diet. In the Torah, the people of Israel are told, repeatedly, that God wishes them to be in a state of “holiness”, hence, taken in practical form, the Jews are disciplined to how they keep their physical body pure by having a selective food diet. Known as “kosher”, which is conformity with the rabbis’ standard of food selection, many of these rules are directly stated in the book of Leviticus. For instance, one of the Dietary Code includes that no fish can be weather that does not have both fins and scales. Indeed, in the book of Leviticus, chapter 11 verse 9 states that “everything in the waters that has fins and scales, whether in the seas or in the rivers, you may eat.” In addition to attending kosher, within a home, women also have other specific practices of ritual “purity”. For example, they have to attend a mikveh at the end of their menstrual period. During their menstrual periods and 7 days after, the husband and wife must abstain from sexual intimacy. Then, the wife will immerse in mikveh as a symbolic act of spiritual preparation. This practice also originated from the Tanakh, where men are warned against having intimate relations with a menstruating woman. Hence, family purity along with the dietary code is a form of ceremonial life discipline that reminds the Jewish people of self-awareness in everyday life.

In other times, such as important rituals, the Holy Scriptures would be used for specific prayers or as explanations behind specific traditions. Similar to a major festival, the Sabbath is a weekly form of tradition to leave a day of prayer and rest completely to God. This tradition was explicitly mandated in the Ten Commandments. The Sabbath is a communal and familial experience where it starts from dusk on Friday to sundown on Saturday. There are two different explanations behind Sabbath: in the Book of Exodus chapter 20 verse 8-10, “remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy. Six days you shall labor and do all your work, but the seventh day is a Sabbath to the LORD your God,” which means a day of rest; while the other explanation is from the Book of deuteronomy, chapter 5 verse 12-14, “observe the Sabbath day, to keep it holy, as the LORD your God command you. Six days you shall labor and do your work, but the seventh day is a Sabbath to the LORD your GOD,” although the same phrase was repeated, this context means the exodus from Egypt/liberation from slavery. However, despite the different purposes, the sayings/ the commanding lessons of the bible is held by the people no matter front he beijing of time or the turning point of Israel’s history, must be held by utmost respect and as a model of human behavior. The Holy Scriptures are also recited during sessions of prayers during their daily routine. Synagogue worship became the dominant form of worship after the 70 CE destruction of the Second Temple. In the book of Daniel, chapter 6 verse 10, “Daniel… got down on his knees three times a day and prayed and gave thanks before his God.” Hence, the daily routine of prayer was established in the everyday of Jew lives. During these services, men traditionally hold a prayer book, wear a tallit, tefillin, and a kipah for prayer services. It is also during these prayer services when one will recite the Shema “Hear O Israel, the Lord is our God, the Lord is one,” from the book of Deuteronomy. After seeing the routine and frequent forms of rituals, many times these traditions can be considered also as a way of life. The emphasis of these rituals focus on the idea of a memorial. In a sense, it is constantly reminding the individuals about being conscious of their past and through forming a dedicated relationship with God, they learn how to be grateful in their everyday life.

In conclusion, the Holy Scripture serves in both the daily and ritual life as a practice of Judaism. Not only serving as guidelines for diets but also in familial relations. The Tanakh is used to give meanings and memories of the past that formed the foundation of the current Judaism. Therefore, these sacred texts can be seen as a full guideline for a way of life that disciplines an individual to live a pure and grateful life. As an IB Way of Knowing, Judaism relies heavily on faith for the people who hold a strong belief that through trusting and enacting these biblical laws, the individual will live an ethical and purposeful life.