

Clothing for worship

Most Jews wear special clothing when they worship.

Q1. What special clothing is this person wearing?

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Q2. The person in the picture has put on special clothing in order to do something important; what is it?

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Q3. What is the headcovering called that the person in this picture is wearing?

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Q4. Why is it important for Jews to cover their heads during worship?

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Q5. Circle the tzitzit in the picture.

Q6. Some Jewish men wear two prayer boxes for morning prayers. What parts of the body are they worn on?

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Answers

1. **Kippah, tallit (and tzitzit).**
2. **They are getting ready to worship.**
3. **Kippah or skullcap.**
4. **As a sign of respect for God and a reminder that God is always present.**
5. **The fringes on the tallit should be circled.**
6. **The arm and the forehead.**

Lesson objectives

- ▶ To explain the meaning attached to the clothing worn for worship.
- ▶ To show how the kippah is worn and why.
- ▶ To show how the tallit and tzitzit are worn and why.

Lesson outcomes

- ▶ The children can explain that some clothes have special meaning for Jewish people.
- ▶ The children can describe a kippah and explain why it is worn.
- ▶ The children can describe a tallit and tzitzit and explain why it is worn.

Teaching notes

Kippah

There is no commandment to wear a kippah, instead it is a Jewish tradition. This tradition may come from the fact that in ancient times, covering the head in west Asian cultures was a sign of respect (you can contrast this with the tradition in western cultures that we take our hats off as a sign of respect). Also, in ancient Israel, the priest at the Temple wore a similar

head covering. Many Jews wear the kippah all of the time, and not only in the synagogue, as a reminder that God is always present. The kippah can be any shape or colour. In fact, children's kippah are often decorated with cartoon characters. Some of the children may be familiar with the Yiddish word for kippah which is yamulke.

Tzitzit and tallit

The commandment for Jews to wear tzitzit on the corners of their clothes is found in Numbers 15:37-41. There is a complex procedure filled with religious significance for tying the knots in the fringes. Very observant Jews wear a special four-cornered garment, similar to a poncho, called a tallit katan (little tallit), under their clothes so that they can fulfil the commandment to wear fringes all day long. The tallit katan is worn under the shirt.

Tefillin

We do not stress the tefillin here because these are generally only worn for morning prayers and only by very observant Jews who pray three times every day. There is a very complicated ritual for putting on the tefillin, during which certain blessings are said. The prayers inside the tefillin are written on parchment scrolls, just like in the mezuzah. The tefillin are always removed immediately after morning prayer.

Complementary work

Let the children look up the commandment which talks about wearing the tzitzit. It is actually mentioned twice, in detail in Numbers 15:37-41 and briefly in Deuteronomy 22:12.

Resources

A children's Bible.