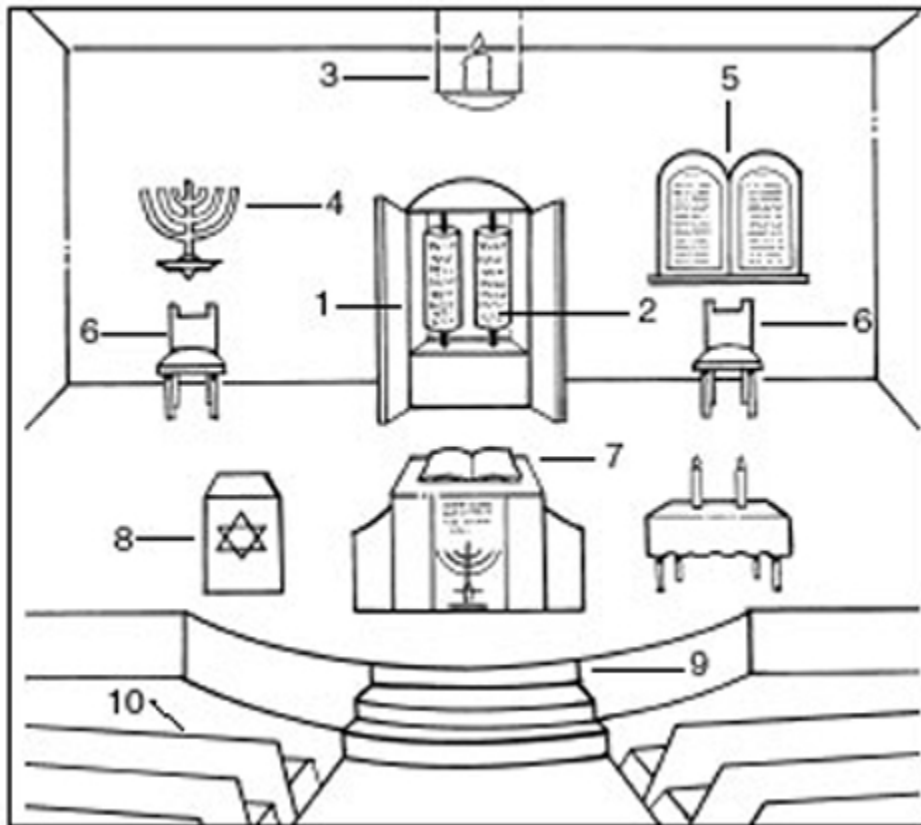


The synagogue

The Jewish house of worship is called a Synagogue.. The main services each week are Friday night and Saturday morning. The rabbi is the religious leader and teacher of a congregation and usually speaks about the weekly Torah portion during Sabbath services. Services are usually led by a cantor who leads the singing or chanting of prayers and reads from the Torah scroll. Anyone who is familiar with the prayers and the melodies may lead a service or read from the Torah.

In the center of the bimah (raised platform) at the front of the sanctuary is the aron kodesh (holy ark), holding the Torah scrolls. Each Torah is handwritten in Hebrew on parchment (animal skin). Above the aron (holy ark) is the ner tamid (eternal light) representing the constant presence of God and reminding us of the menorah, the seven-branched candle holder that illuminated the Temple in Jerusalem. There is also a podium, from which the rabbi speaks, and a table, at which the cantor sings and the Torah is read.



A. Congregation seating
D. Menorah
G. Ner Tamid
B. Torah Scrolls
E. Rabbi's and Cantor's seats
H. Ark
C. Ten Commandments
F. Bimah
I. Rabbi's podium
J. Cantor's and Torah reading table