

The Nature of God, Covenant, Messiah and The Promised Land		✓
<b>Monotheism</b>	Judaism is a monotheistic religion because it teaches that there is only one G-d. Jewish people believe that G-d is: all-powerful, all-good, all-knowing, is everywhere, beyond time and space, is transcendent and immanent, is concerned with humanity and intervenes with the world. They believe that He is the Creator, the Law-giver, that He is a Judge and that He is Eternal.	
<b>All-good</b>	God is loving and kind.	
<b>All-knowing</b>	God is all knowing. He sees everything.	
<b>All-powerful</b>	God is all powerful.	
<b>G-d as One</b>	G-d is 'One'	
<b>Creator &amp; Judge</b>	Creator of the Universe and fair and righteous judge	
<b>Eternal &amp; Everywhere</b>	Without beginning or end, present everywhere	
<b>Beyond time and space</b>	Beyond 'normal' time and space	
<b>Transcendent &amp; Immanent</b>	Involved/intervenes in the world	
<b>Intervening in the World</b>	He acts in history - he steps in	
<b>Concerned with Humanity</b>	He forms a relationship with people and forgives those who seek it	
<b>Shekinah</b>	<p>The Divine Presence: From the Hebrew word Shekinah which means "God's manifested glory" or "God's presence". The word Shekinah doesn't appear in the Bible, but later Jewish scholars used it to refer to the dwelling place of G-d, especially the Temple in Jerusalem and now the synagogue. The Ner Tamid (everlasting light) symbolises this.</p> <p>In the Kabbalah (Jewish Mysticism) the Shekinah is the <i>feminine</i> aspect of the divine, and is associated with the Sefirot - the powers and emanations of G-d. It is seen as being more <i>passive</i> and gentle. The Shekinah is often shown as light, the moon, an eagle, a queen, a princess or a bride.</p>	
<b>Sefirot</b>	<p>In Kabbalah (Jewish Mysticism), the ten <i>sefirot</i> are divine emanations. Each of them can be compared to a vessel that contains an aspect of G-d's presence that connects heaven and earth.</p> <p>The three highest <i>sefirot</i> - <i>Keter</i> (crown), <i>Hokhmah</i> (wisdom) and <i>Binah</i> (understanding) - correspond to divine qualities that are above any equivalent human quality. The seven lower <i>sefirot</i> are reflected in the spiritual qualities and capacities we see in human beings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Hesed.</b> Love, compassion and forgiveness.</li> <li>• <b>Gevurah/Din.</b> Strength, discipline, justice.</li> <li>• <b>Tiferet.</b> Beauty, balance, equanimity.</li> <li>• <b>Nezah.</b> Eternity, endurance.</li> <li>• <b>Hod.</b> Splendour, humility.</li> <li>• <b>Yesod.</b> Foundation, connection, grounding.</li> <li>• <b>Shekinah/Malkhut.</b> Kingship, nobility, aspiration.</li> </ul>	
<b>Prophets</b>	A prophet is a messenger of G-d. In most cases G-d communicated with the prophets through visions or dreams e.g. Abraham is visited by angels, Jacob dreams of a stairway to heaven and later of a wrestling match with a stranger.	
<b>Moses</b>	The Shekinah is present throughout the story of Moses as the burning bush in the desert, and the pillar of fire and the pillar of cloud which guided them through the desert and dwelt over the tabernacle.	
<b>Common and divergent Jewish views on the concept of Shekinah:</b>		
The concept of the Shekinah is understood by all Jews, but is of most importance to Ultra-Orthodox Jews who study Kabbalah in far greater depth than any other group within Judaism.		
<b>Covenant</b>	A <b>Covenant</b> is an <b>agreement</b> between two parties. In a covenant, both parties, such as a man and a woman in marriage or two countries in a trading agreement commit themselves to looking after each other's interests.	

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<b>G-d's Covenant with Abraham</b>	The first Covenant was between G-d and Abraham. G-d promised Abraham that he would be 'the father of many nations' and a 'Promised Land'. In return Abraham had to promise that he and all of his descendants would worship and obey only the one true G-d.	
<b>G-d renews the Covenant with Moses</b>	Throughout the Bible, and throughout later Jewish writing, runs the idea that G-d made a covenant with the nation of Israel. He rescued them from slavery in Egypt and made them His people, to have a particular knowledge of Him and what He requires, to have a special relationship with Him and to witness to other nations.	
<b>Moses: The Greatest of the Prophets</b>	In Judaism, Moses is considered to be the greatest of the prophets because: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• He was G-d's representative to Pharaoh and was instrumental in free the Hebrews from slavery in Egypt.</li> <li>• He led them for forty years in the wilderness.</li> <li>• G-d revealed the Ten Commandments to Moses on Mount Siani.</li> <li>• He led the People of Israel to the Promised Land.</li> <li>• He is the only prophet with whom G-d communicated '<b>face to face</b>'.</li> </ul> Most Jews believe that the Torah (the first five books of the Old Testament) were given directly to Moses, from G-d, on Mount Sinai. This is called <b>DIVINE REVELATION</b> .	
<b>The Torah</b>	The Torah contains: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Genesis</b> - Creation and the lives of the Patriarchs (founding fathers).</li> <li>• <b>Exodus</b> - Slavery and the escape from Egypt.</li> <li>• <b>Leviticus</b> - legislation including minute ritual laws and universal ethical principles.</li> <li>• <b>Numbers</b> - the leadership of Moses and the origins of the priesthood.</li> </ul> <b>MOST IMPORTANT OF ALL - the Covenant made at Sinai and the obligations on which it depends. (Deuteronomy &amp; Exodus)</b>	
<b>The Messiah</b>	The word Messiah comes from a Hebrew term meaning a person who has been anointed with oil as a sign that they have been elected, designated, appointed, given authority, qualified, or equipped for a specific office (job) and the tasks related to it. When talking about 'the Messiah', in Hebrew - <b>Mashiach</b> , it means 'the anointed one', a person who is anointed by G-d, or sent with G-d's blessing. The biblical idea of the Messiah and his work is divinely revealed. i.e. it is in the Torah revealed by G-d to Moses. It did not originate in human thought. The characteristics of the Messiah are revealed through a number of the prophets: Noah, Isaiah, Micah, Amos, Malachi, Ezekiel, and Jeremiah.	
<b>The Messianic Age</b>	In Judaism, the <b>Messianic Age</b> is the future period of time on earth in which the <b>Messiah</b> will reign and bring universal peace and brotherhood, without crime, war and poverty. Many believe that there will be such an <b>age</b> ; some refer to it as the consummate "kingdom of God" or the "world to come".	
<b>Eretz Israel</b>	The Land of Israel. The Promised Land. The land of Canaan, promised by G-d to His Chosen People in the Covenant with Abraham.	
<b>Diaspora</b>	The scattering of a people away from their established or ancestral homeland. In this case, the term refers to all Jews who live anywhere in the world outside of Israel.	
<b>Zionism</b>	The belief that there should be a homeland for the Jewish people, and that their homeland should be in Israel - the land G-d promised to them. Ultra-Orthodox Jews believe that this should only happen when the Messiah comes, other Jews believe that the Jewish people have to make it happen, helping to bring about the Messianic Age.	
<b>Aliyah</b>	Means 'ascent' or 'going up' and refers to Jewish people migrating from the Diaspora to <b>Eretz Israel</b> , the Land of Israel. They use the word Aliyah as they are both physically and spiritually 'going up' to Jerusalem and to the Temple on Mount Zion. Every year at Pesach (Passover) the final prayer is 'next year in Jerusalem, next year may all be free'.	

