

# Judaism: Beliefs and Teachings

## Key Words:

**Covenant:** God's agreement to look after the Jews as his chosen people, subject to Israel's obedience.

**Free will:** The belief that God gives people the opportunity to make decisions for themselves.

**Judge:** The belief that God is fair. The qualities of justice and forgiveness are perfectly balanced.

**Merciful:** Refers to the nature of God as compassionate.

**Resurrection:** The belief of many Jews that, in a future age, the dead will rise from their graves to live again.

**Charity:** This refers to the requirement for Jews to give at least 10% of their income to those in need.

**Healing the world:** The Jewish idea that is about making the world a better place.

**Sanctity of human life:** The belief that all human life is precious and holy.

**Mitzvot:** Jewish rules or commandments.

God created the universe out of nothing and sustains the world, so all species are able to live on it. In Genesis (the first book of the Torah) it says how God created the world in six days and on the seventh day he rested (this is what Jews are reminded of during Shabbat). "In the beginning, God created the heavens and earth."

In Judaism, the Messiah means 'the anointed one' and is a future leader of the Jews who will rule over humanity with kindness and justice. The Messiah will rule during the Messianic age, which will be a time when the world is united in peace.



"Hear, O Israel! The Lord is our God, the Lord alone. You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might." Deut 6:4-5.

## Use the number!

- 1 God calls Abraham
- 2 the land and makes
- 3 covenants
- 4 many nations!



Reform Jews	Orthodox Jews
Many Reform Jews reject the idea of the Messiah. They believe in a Messianic age, but this will be achieved by everyone working together to create world peace, rather than one person.	There is a descendent of King David in every generation who has the potential to become the Messiah. When directed, will bring the Jews back to the promised land. Will uphold the laws of the Torah.

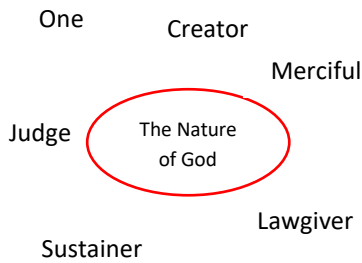
The **Shema** is an important prayer in Judaism and a declaration of faith. It expresses the belief in one God. The Shema confirms the beliefs that there is only one God and shows how Jews should behave with total love, dedication and loyalty to God. Many argue that it is the most important prayer in Judaism. It is said daily at the synagogue and before going to sleep and waking up in the morning.



**Monotheism:** Judaism is similar to Christianity as it only believes in one God.

The Promised Land is the land of **Canaan**, which God promised to Abraham and his descendants.

To seal the covenant, God asked Abraham to make a sacrifice. He asked that Abraham be circumcised and that he circumcise all the men in his household. This tradition still happens today – baby boys are circumcised when they are 8 days old.



- Lesson 1 – The Nature of God**
- Lesson 2 – God as creator and Lawgiver**
- Lesson 3 – Life after Death**
- Lesson 4 – The Nature of the Messiah**
- Lesson 5 – Abraham and the Promised Land**
- Lesson 6 – Moses and the Ten Commandments**
- Lesson 7 – Key Moral Principles**
- Lesson 8 – The Sanctity of Life**
- Lesson 9 – Free Will and Mitzvot**
- Lesson 10 - Revision**

**Covenant at Sinai – Moses**  
After Moses had freed the Israelites, they wandered the desert for 40 years in search of the promised land. Moses would often go up Mount Sinai to speak with God and while he was gone, the people forgot about God and all he had done. They began to worship false idols and behave badly. This is when God gave Moses the 10 commandments – the foundation of all Jewish Law. In return for God saving the Jews and looking after His people, they would follow his laws.

**This is the covenant made at Sinai.**



**Law Giver:** God expects Jews to follow the laws from the 10 Commandments given to Moses on **Mount Sinai**. These moral laws are guidance for how to live your life. These are also the first 10 Mitzvot.

Mitzvot between man and man: "**Do not commit adultery**"  
Mitzvot between man and God: "**Keep the Sabbath holy**"

**Gan Eden:** Paradise. Where the righteous will go after death.  
**Gehenna:** A hell like place where souls are punished.  
**Sheol:** a waiting place until the day of judgement.

God's name is so sacred it is **not** referred to in synagogue readings of scripture.

**YHWH** is the Hebrew word for God's name. However, this is so holy so Adonai (Lord) is used instead.

**G-D** is used as a sign of respect.

**Orthodox Jews** believe the events literally happened and reject the theory of evolution. **Reform Jews** believe that God is the creator of everything but may believe in the theory of evolution.

There are **613** mitzvot in the Torah.  
248 positive, 365 negative.



**Judge:** Jews believe that God will judge how well they follow these laws, based on action, behaviour and beliefs, and will reward/punish as a result. It is not possible to say sorry after death. There are two times when God judges people: Rosh Hashanah (Jewish New Year) and after death.

