

Are *you* JEWISH?



HUMANISTS *believe* in **GOOD.**

THE AMERICAN HUMANIST ASSOCIATION

provides a humanist perspective in strong support of separation of religion from government, preservation and restoration of the environment, protection of civil rights and liberties, and promotion of personal choice regarding introduction of new life, family structure, and death with dignity. Though humanists are not monolithic on every issue—this is a community that encourages tolerance and nurtures diversity—we directly challenge human rights violations and discrimination.



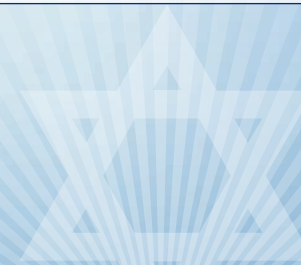
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According to ancient Hebrew tradition, **JUDAISM** began when God chose Moses possibly in the 1200s BCE to liberate his chosen people from slavery in Egypt. But according to modern historians, Judaism began circa 900 BCE when a tribal federation became a nation to end oppression by Assyria and Egypt, the great Middle East imperial templestates. The Hebrew religion began as polytheistic belief system, like those of their adversaries, and similarly, ancient Israel and Judah began as imperial temple states emulating the authoritarian cultures of their time and place.

As the Jewish states struggled for survival they were unable to defend their independence and became vassals to the Egyptian, Assyrian, Persian, Hellenistic, and Roman empires, adopting parts of their culture, along with some humanistic ideas. And when the Jews were exiled from their homeland and dispersed throughout the Roman Empire after the unsuccessful rebellion, another transition occurred. The priestly class was replaced with rabbinical leadership and education, helping Judaism continue to evolve.

Rabbis invented new religious traditions in widely dispersed communities that could only be sustained with the people's consent. They settled disputes, taught customs, and handled inquiry. Later, about 750 to 1500 rabbis produced a legacy of philosophical works grounded on humanist values. And early 19th-century Reform Judaism was strongly influenced by the Enlightenment that swept Europe. In the modern era, many Jews rejected religion altogether and became secular, even prominent figures like Felix Adler, who founded the humanist Ethical Culture Movement in 1876, and Sherwin T. Wine, who founded the Society for Humanistic Judaism in 1969.

You may *also* be a
HUMANIST!



HUMANISM is a progressive philosophy of life that, without supernatural beliefs, affirms our ability and responsibility to lead ethical lives of personal fulfillment that aspire to the greater good of humanity.

“What is hateful to thee, do not unto thy fellow man; this is the whole Law. The rest is but commentary.”

—Rabbi Hillel the Elder (30 BCE–10 CE)

“He who wishes to attain to human perfection, must first study Logic, next the various branches of Mathematics in their proper order, then Physics, and lastly Metaphysics.”

—Rabbi Moses Ben Maimon (Maimonides) 1135–1204

“To define twentieth-century humanism briefly, I would say that it is a philosophy of joyous service for the greater good of all humanity in this natural world and advocating the methods of reason, science, and democracy.”

—Corliss Lamont, 1977 Humanist of the Year

“In a free society, some are guilty, but all are responsible.”

—Rabbi Abraham Joshua Heschel (1907–1972)

“The responsibility for our lives and the kind of world in which we live is ours and ours alone.”

—Humanism and its Aspirations, Humanist Manifesto III, 2003

But *how* can I be a **JEWISH** and a **HUMANIST**?

Jews, like non-theists, are diverse, ranging from Orthodox, to Reform, to Reconstructionist, to Humanistic.

According to a 2008 survey from the Pew Foundation, a majority of Jews either don't believe in a god, or believe that God is an impersonal force.

As Felix Adler said, we must put deed before creed, so let's strive to do good for ourselves and for others. Doing good, that's why you're a humanist!

HUMANISTS | JEWS value reason and education as the best way to make conclusions about the world.

HUMANISM | JUDAISM holds that we create a better society through service for the welfare of humanity.

“If I am not for myself,
who will be for me?
But when I am only for
myself, what am I?
And if not now, when?”

—Pirkei Avot 1:14

“There are two visions of America. One is very suspicious of freedom, uncomfortable with diversity, hostile to science, unfriendly to reason, contemptuous of personal autonomy. It appeals to millions of Americans and threatens our freedom. The other vision loves freedom, encourages diversity, embraces science and affirms the dignity and rights of every individual. It defends all citizens against all unjust coercion and irrational conformity. This second vision is our vision.”

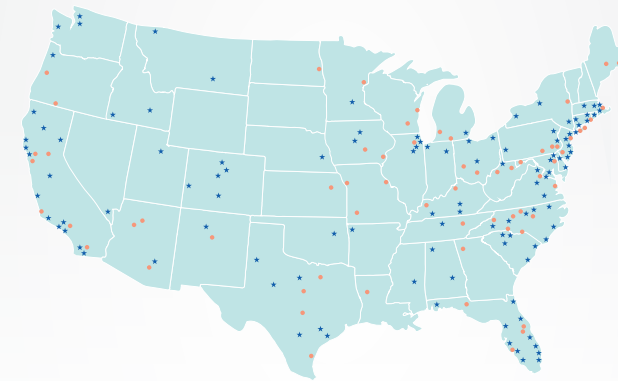
—Rabbi Sherwin T. Wine,
Founder of the Society for Humanistic Judaism,
2003 Humanist of the Year

Be a part of the *growing*
HUMANIST
MOVEMENT!

HOW TO GET INVOLVED:

Membership: New members receive a free book about humanism. All members receive voting privileges, the *Humanist* magazine, and discounts on AHA conferences, seminars, books, literature, and more!

Local Communities: Start or join a local AHA Chapter or Affiliate to connect with humanists in your area and build the humanist community.



Local AHA communities: ★ Chapter ● Affiliate

Education: Enjoy our Center for Education's innovative online and in-person resources designed for individuals, professionals, and groups across the humanist spectrum.

Advocacy: Help us protect the separation of church and state and advocate for social justice and universal human rights.

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See more at www.americanhumanist.org/paths