

Universal Judaism, a Primer

Life is Holy! Celebrate. That is what *Universal Judaism* is about. It is about appreciating and celebrating the Divine Gift which *is* Life. It is about taking this great gift which each of us has, and learning how to use it: To create *good*. To experience *good*. And the word “God” is just a contraction of the word “Good”.

***Universal Judaism* is about mastering the universal, prophetic spirituality that is at the living core of Judaism.** It is this that was transmitted to Christianity, Islam, and indeed, today’s global secular culture, which was based on Hebrew ethics and is vision of *Universal History*.

Universal Judaism is about re-creating our world: without the insanity of false ideologies, without wooden, idolatrous, destructive religion of the past, which distorts Spiritual Truth and divides humankind.

An Idea Whose Time has come

***Universal Judaism* is different. First, we require no birth rituals or any other requirements to belong. It is completely open to any good person,** regardless of religious birth or background, regardless whether they are so-called “believers”, humanists, agnostics or atheists.

The fact is, these days, the vast majority of people are not religious at all. “Just believing”, “Just having faith”, if it does not pass the test of being rational, reasonable, contemporary, meaningful and true, is no longer acceptable. People are simply more educated and more exposed. They do not trust authority blindly. Besides, to do so

would be dangerous, the cause of religious extremism, cultism, if not terrorism.

In *Universal Judaism*, we've replaced "just obeying the law", "tradition for tradition's sake" with a different approach: an intelligent, spiritual *life-methodology*. This empowers every person, no matter what age or background, to prove for themselves— by personal and shared *spiritual experience*— the Truth behind those ancient insights described by the words "covenant", "God", "chosen", "history". (There are other non-religious ways to describe them, too.)

Through *Universal Judaism* you can actually begin to own living, spiritual, knowledge. You will learn simple principles that allow you to re-frame ancient scripture as a contemporary spiritual document. So, you will be able to apply this time-tested knowledge and improve the quality of your life and relationships today.

***Universal Judaism* will give you the tools to create Good in your life. This is the *spiritual experience* that has been called "God".**

It is this you will want your children to know! It is this that will enable them to intelligently identify with their heritage. It is this everyone— Jew, non-Jew, anyone human— needs to know! It is human knowledge: To transform ourselves. To transform our world.

In today's era which is 1) secular 2) scientific 3) spiritual and 4) individualistic, we believe this is the only way to keep the Hebrew World View strong and vibrant, continuously meaningful, if not *Eternal*.

The *Universal Judaism* Perspective

1. *Universal Judaism* is Secular

The word “secular” arose as a necessity, because of the theological belief that God existed “out of time”, so we were, in a way, walled off from God. “Secular” meant existing in a mortal time frame, corralled by our calendar.

Universal Judaism does not hold that God is outside of time nor disconnected from us. For this reason, we believe we do not need any supernatural mediators or religions to connect us. We simply need to nurture a simple relationship with God, a natural relationship.

Indeed, we hold that God *is Nature*, that is, with a capital “N”. Certainly, God is not the earth, the birds and the bees. God is not a mere planet, nor the sun, nor any galaxy. These are different *natures*, with a small “n”. But God is *THE Nature*. God is *The Nature of all natures*. Any and all natures are included *with-in* this One Nature or God.

Another way to say this is God is the *Ultimate* or *Divine* Nature. It is the Reality that includes all realities. The Existence that includes all existences. The Being that includes all beings.

One might say God is *The Universe*, in the original meaning of this word, “*The All Together*”. However, these days, we suspect there may be many universes, of which ours is just one. And universes may be born, and may die. So, however popular, we should be a little cautious with this term.

God or Nature is actually bigger than “*The Universe*”. *Universal Judaism* holds that God or Nature or *The All Together* (*The Total Universe*) is actually *Living*. Nature or God is *Life*, with a capital “L”. The Nature of God is *Life* Itself! And from *Life* comes new universes, new realities, and new existences. From *Life* comes new life, all things living, *animate* and seemingly *inanimate*.

Yes! From Life Divine comes the most astonishing and inexplicable miracle of Life: *Newness*. Out of Itself, Life births the unprecedented. Out of Itself, Life births the previously unseen and unheard of. From Nature arises the new and the next nature; nothing ever repeating itself, the exact same way.

Therefore, The One Nature, *Divine Nature*, is *Creative*. Out of Itself, more of Itself is created. And this “more” is *truly* more: New! A new creation! So, if one were to describe The Creative Nature through the literary device of *personification* (as the Bible does), you might call it *The Creator*.

This is why Nature, as *Universal Judaism* understands It, can truly be called *Elohim*, the Hebrew name translated “God” in the first sentence of *The Book of Genesis*.

In the beginning, God [Elohim] created the heavens and the earth.

Elohim, in fact, is plural term (originally meaning “gods”) which takes a singular verb (*barah* meaning “creates”). Thus, It is The God of all gods, The Nature of all natures, The Life of all living, through which any and all new natures come into Existence. Personifying this, one might call it *Adonai*, the ancient Hebrew word for *Lord*, the word used for “Elohim” in traditional prayer. There are many possible descriptors, including, in this age, excellent scientific and mathematical ones.

Summing this up with the words of the Prophet Jeremiah (10:10), *Universal Judaism* believes in *The Living God, Elohim Chayyim*— a Singular, Living Being, with many living dimensions— aspects, realities, existences, natures, “gods”, *creations, universes, worlds— birthed from with-in*, and birthed *out-of*, Its Nature. This includes, of course, our own world!

Search no more! God is right here in secular life; you don't have to be religious to find God. But, then again, God is also right here in correct religious life, too. God can be found in all of life, because God *is* All Life.

Think about it. The Living God *is* Life. And we, miraculously, are alive! That's cause to celebrate.

2. *Universal Judaism is Scientific*

Because *Universal Judaism* holds that God is Living Nature, and all living natures are part and parcel of It, it is obvious that *Universal Judaism* is scientific.

When we are learning about the nature of anything in this world, or any other world, we are learning about a "piece", so-to-speak, of God.

There is no gap between religion and science in *Universal Judaism* at all. That's because there's no gap between God and Life. Indeed, they are one and the same!

Since God is Living Nature, from which *more* of Itself arises, from which *new* aspects of Itself are *created*, this means that Nature or God *evolves*. Indeed, **The *Living God* could be said to be "Evolution", or the "Force" of Evolution.**

Everything we discover in nature— on the earth, within the range of our senses, unaided, or aided through technology— are different evolutionary-views of The Living God. Even veiled, deep within the subatomic recesses of so-called inanimate "matter", is a *life-force*, a "spirit", "quantum fluctuations", mirroring on its own scale, the Living Nature of God.

Science, no less than religions past, seeks some *Theory of Everything*. “God” is one possible theory. There may be others, scientific, philosophical or religious. But, no matter what the theory, no matter how it is flavored, any theory has to have a *correspondence to Reality*. It must describe “How Life actually is”, or, the theory has no truth to it.

No theory is ever 100% Truth. No theory is ever “Perfect”. Every theory is simply a narrow human understanding, a description within certain boundaries, like the ancient story of Moses looking through a cleft in the Rock. (*Exodus 33:22*) To mistake any theory as 100% true or flawless or perfect, is a contemporary form of *idolatry*: mistaking our understanding of God *as* God.

After all, if God is continuously creating, eternally evolving, could we ever know *All* completely? No!

But, we *can* embark on an adventure.

3. *Universal Judaism is Spiritual*

Because God is Living Nature, the One Nature, Unlimited Nature, Divine Nature— Existence, Reality, Being, Life Itself— God is *Unique, Totally Unique*, unlike any other nature we may study or know.

That’s why *Universal Judaism* would say God is *Holy*, from the Hebrew, *kodesh*, meaning “set apart”, or “distinguished from anything else.”

For this same reason, we may describe God as *Awesome*, from the Hebrew word *yirah*, which, sadly, can also mean *fear*. Perhaps in the past, more primitive people lived in fear of the Holiness of Almighty Nature, but now, we know too much to live in fear. So, we live in wonder and respect, together: *awe*.

***Universal Judaism* opens up the spiritual experience of the Holy to every person.** This is the Mystery of all mysteries, which gives

meaning and depth to human life. This is the Mystery of all mysteries, which, once discerned, can transform the every day into a vibrant, active Living Participation with God's Nature.

Though a properly guided spiritual methodology, easy to learn and practice, *Universal Judaism* opens up the *spiritual dimension* of life. God's Uniqueness or Holiness is not worshipped as some kind of power we must placate. Nor, is It expressed through self-punishment, humiliation, self-afflicting debasement, let alone guilt and shame.

The Holiness of God is expressed through *Celebrating Life*:

Life is Holy! Celebrate.

Universal Judaism's spirituality is joyful. *Universal Judaism's* spirituality is purposeful, advancing spiritual development, while enhancing All Life and Creation.

Universal Judaism's spirituality is about each and every human being learning— through both personal and shared experience— that they are “*made in the Image and Likeness of God*”. (Genesis 1:27)

4. *Universal Judaism* is Individualistic

The word *Image* is translated from the Hebrew word *tzelem*, meaning *reflecting*. To be made in the *Image* of God means to reflect, through our human nature, God's Nature. When we express, in our own human way, the Intelligence, the Feeling, the Creativity, the Uniqueness of Nature, directed for the purpose of achieving *Good*, that's what it means to be “made in *God's Image*”.

The word *Likeness* is translated from the Hebrew word *demut*, meaning “cut off”, meaning *separated* into a unique nature, having a unique, particular self. To be made in the *Likeness* of God, is to express

your individuality. Just as Nature expresses Its Singular Nature, so do you, as an individual.

Evolving and expressing your individuality in a way that is becomes increasingly reflective of God, forms the essential *Derech Adonai—The Way of God—* that *Universal Judaism* teaches. When one enters on this path, one soon begins to understand, intuitively, personally, “How Life Works *for good*”.

One soon begins to discern the “boundaries” that are built into Life, which must be observed if one wishes to create good in one’s Life. One begins to understand that there is a design or organizational structure to the way Nature operates; there is an Intelligence behind what we see. Nature, as we witness it on earth, has an intelligent *order* to it. The word “order” is a very instructive pun in the English for the biblical word “commandment”.

Only by living in harmony with Nature’s Order, or, said in more religious language, obeying “God’s commandment”, can we experience good in our earthly lives, i.e. have an *experience of God*.

When we do, in addition to our objective, scientific view that God is Nature, an “Impersonal” or “Trans-personal” God— we can also have the thrilling experience a *Personal God*, where God seems to relate to us individually: One to one, seemingly Person to person.

God is, of course, not a mere “person”. Yet, God *can* be experienced as acting personally, through each of us as an individual, to the degree that we have developed spiritually. That’s why your individuality is sacred! Your individual is an *altar*, so-to-speak, to God!

In this age of democracy, virtually the entire world has come to acknowledge that every individual has *rights that are endowed by the Creator*. This is a restatement, in the philosophical language of the Enlightenment, of the basic *relationship* described in the second

chapter of *Genesis*: God creates the individual, *directly*; there is a *One to one* relationship.

Now, no one knows what a “right” actually is; it seems to be a kind of a legal fiction, a secular substitute for God-relating concepts like “spirit” or “soul”. And, of course, no one knows, as a proven fact, that “God” actually created *Adam* (Hebrew for one *humankind*) directly. Nonetheless, both views serve in the same way: to highlight the sacredness of individual conscience and freedom. These “come from God”, so they are beyond the control of mortal governments, whether religious or secular. Individual spirituality and freedom is vouchsafed!

This is truly a wonderful age of individuality. The ancient truth of the Hebrew perspective, which sanctifies individuality, has, finally, become the universal norm. This is the age of *Universal Judaism*.

Come as you are. Bring your individuality and thirst for Truth!

Truth, Beyond Good and Evil

As already discussed, when we open up our sacred individuality, we can discern the boundaries, organization, structure, and living “order” to *How Life Works for Good*– or, in biblical language, God’s “Commandment”.

As we have this experience, we learn from Life “what works for good” and “what works for bad”. We discover, that if we live in *alignment* to God’s Order, that we tend to experience good as a consequence; we experience being “blessed”, having an *experience of Good* or God– “God’s Blessing”.

We also discover, that if we live in *un-alignment* to God’s Order,

that we tend to experience bad; we experience being “cursed”, having an *experience of less good, bad*– “God’s punishment”, as it has been ignorantly and dangerously called.

This is the basic natural, spiritual insight, common to many cultures, of *sowing and reaping, karma, cause and effect*, what the Rabbis of Blessed Memory called *middah kneged middah, measure for measure*.

Every single problem we have, personally, or collectively in our society is the consequence of sowing and reaping, causing and effecting, through the mis-use of our creativity. For example: We create an automobile that pollutes the air. This causes us to get asthma and cancer. We get sick. “God punishes us” with “less good”.

Overtime though, we gain the spiritual insight that even so-called “negative” experiences, because they *are* the *consequence* of previous unaligned actions, can *also* be seen for good. In hindsight, negative experiences can be seen as “lessons”, instructing us on how to *re-align* our behavior to the Order of Nature.

For example: After getting sick from pollution, we “repent”, and re-design the automobile, so it is eco-friendly. Then, we receive “mercy” from God or Nature; the illness lessens. “The sin”– or unalignment to Nature’s Order or God’s Command on earth– has been “forgiven”. Out of such an experience emerges the human understanding of *morality*, which we embody in our laws, religious or secular.

Out of such experiences also emerges the religious *concept* of “God as Father”, a Parental (Personal) God, who punishes us, like a parent punishes a child, “for their/our good”.

Warning: Just because we can have an experience of a Personal God seeming to “teach us” through our pain and suffering, does not mean that God sits up on high, intending to make us suffer, designing our

suffering in advance, like a cruel despot. Nor, should such a false god ever be used to justify a whole roster of insane laws, that have little to do with God’s Power, but more to do with human power and manipulation.

This false god is the reason so many secular, scientific, spiritual, individuals living today, rightfully shun false religion.

Universal Judaism believes its time to clean up this ungodly mess.

A Healthy Experience of *Covenant*

Originally, *covenant* or, in Hebrew, *brit*, was a kind of “mutual non-aggression” pact between two kings or between a king and his vassals. Each would pledge their cooperation, so that good– not war and destruction– would emerge from the relationship. This concept was then attributed to a mutual-alignment between God and us, a *covenant*.

At the foundation of covenant, is the spiritual experience of “How Life Works for Good”, which we’ve already spoken about. Depending on whether we align or mis-align ourselves to “God’s Commandment”, the Order of Nature, we experience “God’s Blessing” or “God’s Curse” on earth, more good or less good. (*Deuteronomy 30ff*) Aligning our actions to Nature’s Order, we live in harmony with Nature, and nature on earth responds with rain, bountiful crops, and goodness for all. (*Deuteronomy 11:4-17*) Thus, a covenant between God and us forms, generating a relationship between Creator and *co-creator*.

This basic spiritual experience of covenant is common to many different religions and cultures, though different words are used to describe it. However, the Hebrew People take this fundamental natural experience to a different level. Mysteriously aware of the Oneness of Nature, even beyond the nature of the earth, the Hebrews perceived themselves as an instrument of Unity and Peace, heralding

It not just for their own nation, but also for *everyone— all the nations of the world*. The Hebrew vision was a *World Vision*. In theological language, this is called *history*.

What we commonly call “history”, is not just the memorization of past dates and disjointed events. *History*, in the spiritual sense, is the forward, progressive, evolution of human civilization, towards Peace, Justice and *The Good*, so that all cultures and societies become “made in the Image and Likeness of God”.

Through history, in the spiritual sense, all cultures and societies and nations progressively come to recognize “God”: The One, The All, The Supreme Existence, Reality, Being, Unity Itself. Out of this mutual-awakening, comes Peace, Justice, Righteousness, and all the great prophetic virtues, for all humankind.

So, one could say that *covenant*, when lived out historically, is the *spiritual path of all humankind, together: universal history*.

This great spiritual purpose was passed down from the Hebrews to their heirs, Israelites, Jews, and from there to Christians, Muslims, and in fact our entire global secular world, inspired by this prophetic ideal.

Today, we are not restricted to nature on earth. Indeed, we can now travel to the moon, planets and the universe beyond. Today, we are not restricted to mere natural elements, but can actually manufacture elements that Nature, “The Creator”, never “imagined”. This is the great gift of free will in today’s scientific, technological era, with expanded human *dominion*. (*Genesis 1:26*)

Nevertheless, the fundamental dynamic of covenant remains unchanged. Human beings must learn how to align themselves with The God of Creation, and work together through history. Once this right relationship is forged, good follows. Not just for one small people or nation, but, true to the Hebrew Vision, our *entire species*.

Welcome to the adventure of being human.

The Adventure of *Universal Judaism*

Such a grand vision begins with the thoughts, the feelings, and the actions of each and every individual. Are you ready for this adventure?

***Universal Judaism* teaches secular, scientifically-minded, contemporary people, how to ignite the spiritual experience of *covenant*, so it actually can become a living, breathing, *personal* experience, not a mere formal “belonging” to some synagogue or religious institution. Are you ready to go beyond “religion as usual”?**

Universal Judaism teaches one how to engage the spiritual process of living in conscious *alignment* to “How Life Works for Good”. This alignment will begin with you, personally, but will radiate to others— family, community, nation, world— all others. This spiritual alignment radiates also to future generations, All Life and Creation. And most importantly, it will continuously radiate— growing, expanding, evolving, continuously reflecting The Nature of *The Living God* in whose Image and Likeness— as spiritual experience reveals and “proves” to us— we *are*!

As one embarks on the covenantal path, one begins to notice something marvelous, often described by the word “Providence”, “Grace”, *hasgacha* in Hebrew, “synchronicity” in more secular spiritual language. Regardless how you describe it, it is the experience of increased Coordination, Unity, Focus, and Universal Purposefulness. Indeed, one increasingly *experiences*— emotionally, intellectually, physically, such an alignment. And it feels good!

Improving our Alignment to God’s Nature, we begin to experience Life as Being One, *Adonai Echad*. We truly begin feel like a “Chosen

Person”, or, in participation with like-minded others, a *Chosen People*.

Once one has the taste of such a spiritual experience, it is not at all hard to imagine that there is, truly, a solid, real-life, foundation to the religious concepts of “covenant” or “chosenness”. These terms cease to be the divisive, destructive, dangerous and silly “we’re loved by God more than you”; “we’re saved; you’re damned”.

Through *Universal Judaism*, covenant becomes revealed for what it really is: A powerful relationship with a Personal God, lived out through an expansive, Universal Historical Vision, with others. One can then readily identify with the Living Purpose of the Jewish People, because one is actually *experiencing* it prophetically, as a living God-experience in your very own personal life.

And perhaps even more wondrously, by culturing this huge spiritual experience of *covenant*, one can actually begin to appreciate, fully, the legends, events, and stories that are framed in scripture. After all, scripture is essentially just a recording of human spiritual experience.

Once this experience opens up for us personally, we can understand scripture clearly, lucidly, without all the confusions, misinterpretations and past propaganda.

The Bible, the *Torah*

This is a unique difference between *Universal Judaism* and other approaches:

We teach from spiritual experience first, and then footnote scripture and other literature.

It is absolutely amazing! Once one begins to personally experience a *Derech Adonai*, a *Way of God*, scripture begins to suddenly make sense. It is no longer shrouded in mystery, lost in conflicting interpretations, or soiled by political bias. It becomes, in a sense, a Living Book: Your life is reflected in it, and it reflects your life, and Life Itself.

When one begins to see that these spiritual teachings, recorded in these ancient texts, can help us produce greater happiness, greater relationship harmony, and greater monetary success, a new found respect for scripture takes place, but without the “scriptural idolatry” that is so contaminating so many religions.

Let us be perfectly clear here: *Universal Judaism* does not believe that the Bible was factually a “Revelation from God.” We do not believe that the *Torah*— *The Five Books of Moses*, *Pentateuch* in Greek or *Chumash* In Hebrew (from the Greek word *penta*, or the Hebrew word “chamesh” for “five”), was a revelation from God to Moses.

We do not take the Bible or the *Torah* literally, in the sense of it being perfect, infallible or pure fact. We take it *literally*, as a glorious example of spiritual *literature*.

We believe, and research proves it, that the *Torah* was a consolidation of texts that was put together after the Babylonian Exile (586 B.C.E.) It was to serve as a constitution for Israel. It became identified with the historical purpose of the “revelation” of the legendary “Moses”, but, it was not that same, exact revelation, nor is the scriptural Moses that exact, same Moses. To think otherwise, is religious sentimentality. It is spiritually valuable, beautiful, instructive. But, it is not fact.

The story behind the origin of *Torah* is far too complicated to narrate here, and there are many missing gaps in it. But, over time, the *Torah* became the scriptural basis for the authority of the early Rabbis who framed up “Judaism”. Under a state of military occupation by Rome,

with the dispersion of Jews all of the world, they drew upon the *Torah* to create a kind of “portable government” to sustain the Jews. Like a seed, their hopes were that the winds of history would blow the *Torah* and its people, back upon their native soil; then, this seed would crack open, plant itself, and generate a new, living, flourishing culture and Godly government.

Although *Universal Judaism* does not accept the traditional belief that the “Torah was given to Moses at Mt. Sinai”, nor that the “Oral Law”, Rabbinic interpretation, has the full-weight of Moses’ authority—nonetheless, we consider the *Torah* and the Bible, to be precious, beyond-worthy of continued study and contemplation.

Why should one throw out the spiritual experiences of generations past, simply because one does not agree with the religious doctrines that have been inherited? Why should one throw out precious, irreplaceable knowledge, because these scriptures were interpreted superstitiously, not in a secular, scientific, spiritual Truth-based perspective?

The *Torah*, the Bible, and indeed, the enormous library of Jewish thinking, remains an invaluable recording of human spiritual understanding and awareness. Drawing upon this knowledge, we do not have to repeat the same mistakes as our ancestors; we can build upon this knowledge, learn from past mistakes, and not repeat them.

This can speed up our spiritual and our historical evolution as people, to continue our 4000 year old *covenant*, but, reconfigured for today’s *post-modern* world.

A Holy Community

The principles of “chosenness” and “covenant” are hardly ownable by the Jewish People alone. After all, these are spiritual phenomena.

The “mechanics” of how they operate are built into the *design* of Life, so-to-speak; they are not “religious”. They are just “How Life Works for Good”, in a universal, spiritual, historical context, as exemplified through the Jewish People.

Much essential knowledge about “chosenness” and “covenant” has been transmitted through the various denominations of Judaism. Others have learned this through sister-religions, such as Christianity or Islam. Still, others, open to the adventure of spiritual life in a free, democratic society, have discovered the Natural, Universal laws of Life on their own, outside formalized religious-structure, described in different, even non-religious ways.

Today, it is not religion, but science that has become the dominant force of knowledge in this world. Science is not “faith based”; it is fact based. Today, people are not so quick to accept, without question, doctrines and teachings from the past, let alone religious prejudice or propaganda. This has left a terrible gap in the hearts of people, who wish to spiritually identify with the Hebrew Vision, but intellectually and emotionally cannot go there.

This is a challenging historical event. It has never happened before, on the same scale, with so many different kinds of peoples, religions and cultures been involved. Because of this, *Universal Judaism* feels there must be a leap, a far-reaching leap, every bit as daring as the early Rabbis, who framed “Judaism” in the first century.

So, *Universal Judaism* has opened our doors to everyone— regardless of birth or religious background. We require no genealogies, birth rituals, formal education or pedigree.

This does not mean we are “everything goes”, and that we have placed the truths of everyone in a giant “Cuisinart”, blending it up into some “universal soup”. This kind of *syncretism* is dangerous, and disrespectful to our sacred individualities.

Nor, does this mean that we *refuse* the meaning and beauty of our unique, Jewish heritage and ancestral gifts, in order to “fit in” be more “universal”. Hardly! Such an approach was tried, and failed.

Quite the contrary, *Universal Judaism* is totally open to all the gifts of our tradition and past, all the great blessings and achievements of synagogue and community life. We are also open to the Truths expressed by other faiths, and of current theories of science, provided these do not endanger the sacredness and uniqueness of the Hebrew historical task and identity.

However, for us, any and all knowledge, past and present, has just got to make sense! It’s got to be reconfigured so it is authentically-contemporary: *secular, spiritual, scientific and individualistic*.

“Modern” should not mean some cheap “watered-down” version of more traditionalist religions, nor some mere sentimentalism “to make the grandparents happy”, a mere “bar mitzvah machine”.

Our *synagogue*— a Greek word that means *gathering place*— will be designed differently for that reason. We will not be predominantly worship based, nor will we be based upon on the entire cycle of Jewish holidays. Our synagogues will emphasize living, spiritual education, and its intelligent, purposeful application to enhance the goodness— the experience of God— in everyday life.

It is this that creates a Holy Community, a community devoted to living the experience of the Holy: The Unique God. The Holy *One*. *Adonai Echad*, as scripture describes it, in the *Shema Yisrael*. (Deuternomy 6:4)

Living Whole

Universal Judaism education is designed to *unify* our sense of selves. Today, the vast majority of good and noble governments draw heavily upon the Hebrew tradition for their ethics and morality. Practically-speaking there is no austere separation between “Jew” and “non-Jew” in terms of essential ethics and law.

Moreover, today, the State of Israel has joined the nations of the world, to a great extent, as an equal. We are no longer living exiled into a *diaspora*. The Great vision of the Rabbis, when they “invented” their portable tabernacle, “Judaism”, is fulfilling itself, in the flesh.

There is no longer any reason for Jews to live half in the Jewish world, and half in the non-Jewish world anymore. Today, it is possible for a Jew to be fully Jewish, and fully participate in the World, without loss of our uniqueness or essential humanity.

There is no reason for us to forfeit our uniqueness, in order to be part of the world. Quite the contrary! Our differences are badly needed!

Sadly, there continue to be many real, and critical differences between Jewish and non-Jewish viewpoints. Many of our teachings were terribly misinterpreted, and mangled by different theological and philosophical perspectives, as well as unkempt political motivations.

This has resulted in many of the problems of our Westernized culture and economy. An example of this is our current ecological devastations, which is the result not of the Jewish view of universalism, but the Roman Imperial view. This, and many other abuses, need to be corrected and healed with a healthy *Universal Judaism* perspective.

The Truth of Jewish teachings needs to be known and taught openly, to *everyone!*

As a *Light Unto the Nations (Isaiah 42:6)*, *Universal Judaism* considers it our unique task to “set the record straight”, and teach a True understanding of Our God, Nature Itself, for today.

As the root of Christianity, Islam, and the entire global, secular culture, all of which were inspired by the Hebrew prophets, we believe this is our critical contribution to World peace, justice and mutual-understanding. We can help achieve this, only by remaining ourselves!

That’s why in *Universal Judaism* synagogues, *circumcision*, *kasher*, the *bar mitzvah* and many other customs, are still honored, explored and evolved, for today’s way of Life. However, these are re-framed, reconfigured, and expressed anew– to highlight their timeless truth, scientific wisdom, and critical *Universal* importance.

Because this is a different era, we will often teach these customs differently, in a way that makes more intellectual and spiritual, scientific sense. But, the essence of these customs remains unshakably authentic. (For more information, go to www.universaljudaism.org, publications.)

The world has changed! After so many centuries of repression and persecution, we finally have the opportunity to release the beauty and the fragrance of our great Jewish legacy to the entire world– to everyone– without apologies!

Finally, there is an approach to Jewish education that retains the best, and the most noble of Hebrew spiritual understandings, without getting trapped in the “same ole’ same ole”.

The Holiness of our Hebrew Perspective– 4000 years old and counting– now continues through our *Universal* approach– now shared, with complete openness to Jews, Christians, Muslims and our entire secular global world.

Questions: The Beginning of Answers

What do you want personally? What do you want for your family?

What do you want for your nation? What do you want for all nations?

What do you want for All Life and Creation?

What will be your legacy? What will your footprint look like?

How do you wish to approach your Life? What shall its purpose be?

Shall you live for yourself alone? Or, shall you just live for your immediate family or friends? Or, shall you live for that Greater Family– that family of Humankind– which includes your own?

Do you wish to live joyfully? Happily?

Do you wish to have success? How do you measure this success?

Do you wish to own, for yourself, the amazing spiritual gifts of the Hebrew people? Do you wish to discover the gifts that created the world's most astonishing contribution to the arts, sciences, government, economics etc. to all the world's culture– far disproportionate to the less than 1% of the world population that we have been?

What do you want for your children, should you choose to have any? Would you like them to have self-esteem? To know they are “chosen”, in the right, humble meaning of that word? To know that they can, freely direct their lives and their creativity to achieve?

No one can take away your freedom to choose. Whether it arises from “rights endowed by the Creator”, or because God breathed His Breath

into the dust, to form Adam— your freedom is Sacred, born of *Something Beyond*.

Truly, your freedom is the spiritual sign that you indeed have individuality. And this individuality is not born of merely earthly nature, but of a Higher Nature. You are not just natural creature, like a bird, a bee or a beast. You are also *Super-natural*, literally meaning *Beyond Nature*. You are *Made in the Image and Likeness of God*.

So, ask the right questions. Choose how you would like to live.

Universal Judaism is here for you to consider.

Life is Holy! Celebrate.

**The Association for Universal Judaism
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