


NEED TO KNOW

Jews believe that **everything** comes from God.
He willed the universe into creation and controls
and sustains it by his will.

UNDERSTAND AND EXPLAIN

Some of God's attributes
Evil and free will
The creation account in Genesis 1
The different Jewish beliefs about creation

THE NATURE OF GOD & CREATOR			Judaism Beliefs and Teachings
The key belief about God	Orthodox belief about creation	Reformed belief about creation	
The Shema			
Deuteronomy 6:4			
omnipotent	omniscient	omnipresent	
The Jewish view of evil		The Jewish view of free will	
"...from the rising of the sun, to the place of its setting, people may know there is none besides me. I am the LORD, and there is no other. I form the light and create darkness, I bring prosperity and create disaster; I the LORD, do all these things." <i>Isaiah 45:5-7</i>			

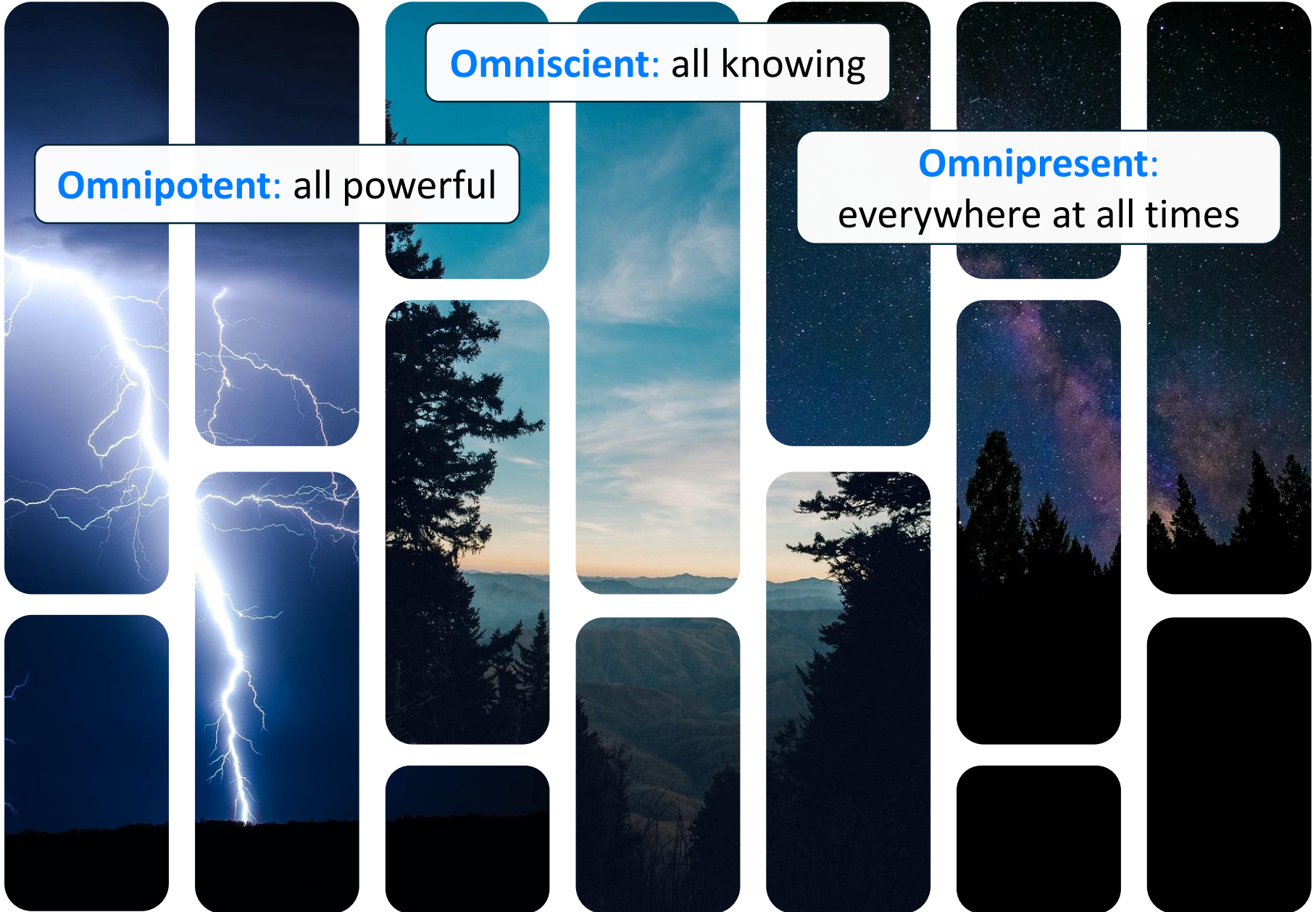
God as Creator

Judaism
Beliefs and Teachings

Omniscient: all knowing

Omnipotent: all powerful

Omnipresent:
everywhere at all times



Everything comes from God

'I am the LORD and there is none else, I form light and create darkness, I make weal and create woe - I the LORD do all these things.'

Isaiah 45:6-7

Another translation:

'I am Yahweh, and there is no other. I form light and create darkness, I make success and create disaster; I, Yahweh, do all these things.'





Free will allows us as humans to make our own decisions, deciding what actions we want to take. If there was no evil in the world, there would be no such thing as a bad decision, meaning that free will would be pointless.

For Jews, as much as evil is real and present, and has led to great suffering, it is quite literally a necessary evil.

Genesis 1: Creation

And God said, “Let there be **light**,” and there was light. God saw that the light was **good**, and he separated the light from the darkness. God called the light “day,” and the darkness he called “night.” And there was evening, and there was morning - the **first day**.

And God said, “Let there be a vault between the waters to **separate water from water**.” So God made the vault and separated the water under the vault from the water above it. And it was so. God called the vault “sky.” And there was evening, and there was morning - the **second day**.



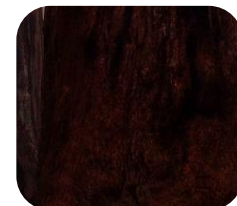
God as Creator

Judaism

Beliefs and Teachings

And God said, “Let the water under the sky be gathered to one place, and let dry ground appear.” And it was so. God called the dry ground “**land**,” and the gathered waters he called “seas.” And God saw that it was **good**.

Then God said, “Let the land produce vegetation: **seed-bearing plants** and trees on the land that bear **fruit** with seed in it, according to their various kinds.” And it was so. The land produced **vegetation**: plants bearing seed according to their kinds and trees bearing fruit with seed in it according to their kinds. And God saw that it was **good**. And there was evening, and there was morning - the **third day**.



God as Creator

And God said, “Let there be lights in the vault of the sky to separate the day from the night, and let them serve as signs to mark sacred times, and days and years, and let them be lights in the vault of the sky to give light on the earth.” And it was so. God made two great lights - the **greater light to govern the day** and the **lesser light to govern the night**. He also made the **stars**. God set them in the vault of the sky to give light on the earth, to govern the day and the night, and to separate light from darkness. And God saw that it was **good**. And there was evening, and there was morning -the **fourth day**.



God as Creator

And God said, “Let the **water teem with living creatures**, and let **birds** fly above the earth across the vault of the sky.” So God created the great creatures of the sea and every living thing with which the water teems and that moves about in it, according to their kinds, and every winged bird according to its kind. And God saw that it was **good**. God blessed them and said, “Be fruitful and increase in number and fill the water in the seas, and let the birds increase on the earth.” And there was evening, and there was morning—the **fifth day**.



God as Creator

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And God said, “Let the land produce living creatures according to their kinds: the **livestock**, the creatures that move along the ground, and the **wild animals**, each according to its kind.” And it was so. God made the wild animals according to their kinds, the livestock according to their kinds, and all the creatures that move along the ground according to their kinds. And God saw that it was **good**.

So God created mankind in his own image, in the image of God he created them; **male and female** he created them. God saw all that he had made, and it was very **good**. And there was evening, and there was morning - the **sixth day**.



A little history for you. 1685-1815 has come to be known as the 'Age of Reason' or 'The Enlightenment' as a key time in history when society looked to science and reason to make sense of the world. This made people in religious groups have to ask some big questions.



At the end of the 18th century European Jews, especially in France and Germany had three options:



1. Convert to Christianity – the more socially accepted religion at the time
2. Turn their backs on the enlightenment and face alienation and potentially the loss of rights
3. ‘Modernise’ Judaism by cleansing it of superstitious and outdated methods and gain social acceptance without losing their Jewish identity

Different Jews picked different options. But it was out of the third option that Reform Judaism was born. Those who opposed the change were labelled ‘Orthodox’

God as Creator

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Orthodox Jews: Jews who believe the Torah was given directly to Moses by God, should be completely believed and its laws followed very closely



This is the word of God, and therefore events took place **exactly** as described in the holy book. The fact this seems incredible is not a problem, as God is omnipotent (can do anything).

Reform Jews: Jews who take a more metaphorical interpretation of the holy book



This ancient story is intended to be read as a **metaphor**, not a literal historical document. Perhaps the six “days” refer to enormous periods of time, and perhaps Adam and Eve’s story represents early human history rather than being two real people.