



**“Can I Convert
to Judaism if I’m
Not Religious?”**

“Yes!”

**“What If I Don’t
Believe in God?”**

“Still Yes!”

ADOPTION INTO HUMANISTIC JUDAISM

A Secular, Cultural Jewish Conversion

Welcome to the Family!



“Who’s A Jew?”

According to Humanistic Judaism, You Are! – If You Say You Are

Since we don’t want our own identities “policed,” we are not interested in policing anyone else’s identities. If you tell us you are Jewish, we accept you as Jewish!

Here are excerpts from our movement’s position, adopted in 1988:

“...We welcome into the Jewish people all who sincerely desire to share the Jewish experience regardless of their ancestry. We challenge the assumption that the Jews are primarily or exclusively a religious community....

“The Jewish people is a world people with a pluralistic culture and civilization all its own.... It encompasses many languages, a vast body of literature, historical memories, and ethical values.... We Jews have a moral responsibility to welcome all people who seek to identify with our culture and destiny....

“RESOLUTION: ...a Jew is a person of Jewish descent or any person who declares himself or herself to be a Jew and who identifies with the history, ethical values, culture, civilization, community, and fate of the Jewish people.”

Full statement at www.SHJ.org/who

Why Make It “Official?”

Though formal conversion is not a requirement to consider yourself a Humanistic Jew, many choose to undergo the Society for Humanistic Judaism’s adoption process.



Below are quotes from those who have done so, explaining why:

- “I have been doing a lot of my own research on all aspects of Judaism but feel it would be best to have a more organized set of materials. I was raised Christian and left the religion a few years ago and have since been more agnostic but have always been drawn to Judaism since I first learned about it as a kid....”
—C.P.
- “In my heart, I have been a Jew for a long time. I don’t know why this is so, but it is so. Coming from a non-Jewish background, I have been tentative about this feeling, but it has been there for nearly 60 years, since I first ran into secular Jews.... Being adopted into this tradition, and adopting it, is but a first step, but for me it is major.”
—S.E.
- “I had always felt a strong pull and connection toward Judaism in general, but I felt that my different view toward the idea of god meant that I would not be welcome. Finding that Humanistic Judaism existed was a happy and welcome surprise. I feel that I have found, in Humanistic Judaism, a place where I fit and a path that I know I will stay on for my entire life.”
—S.M.

Society for Humanistic Judaism's Adoption/ Cultural Conversion Program

Once ready to participate in our formal adoption program, here are the steps to follow:

Step 1 — Join us! If you haven't yet, become a member of the Society for Humanistic Judaism at or above the "household" level, at www.SHJ.org/membership. Or join one of our in-person affiliated communities listed at www.SHJ.org/find.

Step 2 — Receive a mailed Welcome Kit chock full of printed learning materials, including *The Guide to Humanistic Judaism*.

Step 3 — Consult with the SHJ Rabbi (rabbi@shj.org) about your journey into Humanistic Judaism, including an individualized plan of learning should you want one.

Step 4 — Write a short statement on why you would like to be a Humanistic Jew. Not meant to be academic, the statement can be less than a page and should comprise personal reflections on your Humanistic Jewish identity.

Step 5 — Choose a Hebrew name! As the shared language of a global people, Hebrew ties us to our culture and heritage.

Step 6 — Receive a beautiful, personalized Humanistic Judaism Adoption Certificate!

Steps 7 and onward! — Connect to Humanistic Jewish communities for holiday celebrations and lifecycle events. And continue your lifelong Jewish learning through the vast printed, audio, and video resources curated over decades by the Society for Humanistic Judaism.



Not Yet Ready?

We're always here for you. In the meantime, ways to continue learning about Humanistic Judaism include:

- Explore www.SHJ.org and sign up for our free eNewsletter (<http://bit.ly/shjnews>).
- Join the conversation at the lively Humanistic Judaism Discussion Group on Facebook (<http://bit.ly/hjdiscuss>).
- Attend an in-person event if you live near one of our affiliated communities (www.SHJ.org/find).
- Watch videos on our YouTube Channel (www.youtube.com/societyforhj) and that of the International Institute for Secular Humanistic Judaism (www.youtube.com/IISHJvid).
- Read a book by the founding rabbi of Humanistic Judaism, Sherwin T. Wine, such as *Judaism Beyond God*.

For more information or to get involved, please contact:

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Society for **Humanistic
Judaism**

Generously supported by the National Center to Encourage Judaism (ncejudaism.org).



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