



NOAHIDE

ACADEMY OF ISRAEL

These are the Thirteen Principles of Torah Faith for Jews and Noahides

Dear Noahide,

In front of you are the 13 Principles of Faith, our Fundamentals Life Values, according to the Torah of Moses, Revealed by HaShem on Mount Sinai as they are relevant to you.

Study them well in its 3 versions, short, sources and complete. Print them out and review them at least once a week (if possible).

Rabbi Moses Ben Maimon, the Rambam
Spain (1135-1204)

The great codifier of Torah law and Jewish philosophy, Rabbi Moshe ben Maimon ("Maimonides" also known as "The Rambam"), compiled what he refers to as the Shloshah Asar Ikkarim, the "Thirteen Fundamental Principles" of the Jewish Faith, as derived from the Torah. Maimonides refers to these thirteen principles of faith as "the fundamental truths of our religion and its very foundations." The Thirteen Principles of Jewish faith (as recorded in Maimonides' introduction to Perek Chelek) are as follows:

The Short Version

1. Belief in the existence of the Creator, who is perfect in every manner of existence and is the Primary Cause of all that exists.
2. The belief in G-d's absolute and unparalleled unity.
3. The belief in G-d's non-corporeality, nor that He will be affected by any physical occurrences, such as movement, or rest, or dwelling.
4. The belief in G-d's eternity.
5. The imperative to worship G-d exclusively and no foreign false gods.
6. The belief that G-d communicates with man through prophecy.
7. The belief in the primacy of the prophecy of Moses our teacher.
8. The belief in the divine origin of the Torah.
9. The belief in the immutability of the Torah.
10. The belief in G-d's omniscience and providence.
11. The belief in divine reward and retribution.
12. The belief in the arrival of the Messiah and the messianic era.
13. The belief in the resurrection of the dead.

You may recite the Thirteen Articles, in a slightly more poetic form, beginning with the words **Ani Maamin** --"I believe"—once a week, or each day in the morning during your prayer.

Version with Sources

The following is a list of the Thirteen Principles, as penned by Maimonides, along with **their biblical sources**:

1. I believe with complete faith that the Creator, blessed be His name, is the Creator and Guide of all created beings, and that He alone has made, does make, and will make all things.

Source: "I am G-d your G-d"²—Exodus 20:2.

2. I believe with complete faith that the Creator, blessed be His name, is One and Alone; that there is no oneness in any way like Him; and that He alone is our G-d—was, is and will be.

Source: "Hear O Israel, G-d is our G-d, G-d is One"—Deuteronomy 6:4.

3. I believe with complete faith that the Creator, blessed be His name, is incorporeal; that He is free from all anthropomorphic properties; and that He has no likeness at all.

Source: "You did not see any image on the day that G-d spoke to you at Horeb [Sinai]."—Deuteronomy 4:15.

4. I believe with complete faith that the Creator, blessed be His name, is the first and the last.

Source: "[The heavens] are the abode for the G-d who precedes all"—Deuteronomy 33:27.3

5. I believe with complete faith that the Creator, blessed be His name, is the only one to whom it is proper to pray, and that it is inappropriate to pray to anyone else.

Source: "Lest you lift up your eyes to heaven, and see the sun, and the moon, and the stars, all the host of heaven . . . and be drawn away to prostrate yourselves before them and worship them"—Deuteronomy 4:19

6. I believe with complete faith that all the words of the prophets are true.

Source: "G-d will raise up a prophet from among you... and you shall hearken to him"—Deuteronomy 18:15.

7. I believe with complete faith that the prophecy of Moses our teacher, peace unto him, was true; and that he was the father of the prophets, both of those who preceded and of those who followed him.

Source: "G-d would speak to Moses face to face"—Exodus 33:11; "Mouth to mouth, I speak to him"—Numbers 12:8.4

8. I believe with complete faith that the whole Torah which we now possess was given to Moses, our teacher, peace unto him.

Source: "With this you shall know that G-d sent me to do all these deeds, for I did not devise them myself"—Numbers 16:28.

9. I believe with complete faith that this Torah will not be changed, and that there will be no other Torah given by the Creator, blessed be His name.

Source: "You shall not add to it, not subtract from it"—Deuteronomy 13:1.5

10. I believe with complete faith that the Creator, blessed be His name, knows all the deeds and thoughts of human beings, as it is said, "It is He who fashions the hearts of them all, He who perceives all their actions."

Source (in addition to Psalms 33:15 quoted in the actual text): "Who is great in counsel and mighty in carrying it out, for Your eyes are open to all the ways of mankind"—Jeremiah 32:19; "G-d saw that the evil of man on earth was very great"—Genesis 6:5.

11. I believe with complete faith that the Creator, blessed be His name, rewards those who observe His commandments, and punishes those who transgress His commandments.

Source: "And G-d said to Moses: 'Whoever has sinned against Me, him I will erase from My book!'"—Exodus 32:33.6

12. I believe with complete faith in the coming of Moshiach, and although he may tarry, nevertheless, I wait every day for him to come.

Source: "G-d will restore your fortunes, have mercy on you, and gather you"—Deuteronomy 30:3.

13. I believe with complete faith that there will be resurrection of the dead at the time when it will be the will of the Creator, blessed be His name and exalted be His remembrance forever and ever.

Source: "Many who sleep in the dust shall awaken, some to everlasting life, and some to ever lasting shame and reproach"—Daniel 12:2.

Compilation Source: Rabbi Eliezer Zalmanov

The Complete Version

The Thirteen Foundations of Torah Faith

For Jews and Noahides

The First Foundation

Is to believe in the existence of the Creator, blessed be He. This means that there exists a Being that is complete in all ways and He is the cause of all else that exists. He is what sustains their existence and the existence of all that sustains them. It is inconceivable that He would not exist, for if He would not exist then all else would cease to exist as well, nothing would remain. And if we would imagine that everything other than He would cease to exist, this would not cause His, HaShem's, blessed be He, existence to cease or be diminished. Independence and mastery is to Him alone, HaShem, blessed be His Name, for He needs nothing else and is sufficient unto himself. He does not need the existence of anything else. All that exists apart from Him, the angels, the universe and all that is within it, all these things are dependent on Him for their existence.

This first foundation is taught to us in the statement, "I am HaShem your G-d..." (Shemos [Exodus] 20:2, Devarim [Deuteronomy] 5:6).

The Second Foundation

Is the unity of HaShem, Blessed be His Name. In other words, to believe that this being, which is the cause of all, is one. This does not mean one as in one of a pair nor one like a species [which encompasses many individuals] nor one as in one object that is made up of many elements nor as a single simple object which is infinitely divisible. Rather, He, HaShem Blessed be His Name, is a unity unlike any other possible unity.

This second foundation is referred to when [the Torah] says, "Hear Israel! HaShem is our G-d, HaShem is one". (Devarim [Deuteronomy] 6:4)

The Third Foundation

Is that He is not physical. This means to believe that the One whom we have mentioned is not a body and His powers are not physical. The concepts of physical bodies such as movement, rest, or existence in a particular place cannot be applied to Him. Such things cannot be part of His nature nor can they happen to Him. Therefore the Sages of blessed memory stated that the concepts of combination and separation do not apply to Him, and they said, "Above there is no sitting nor standing, no separation nor combination." [Ramba'm here goes into an explanation of certain Hebrew words. Since this would be meaningless in translation I am skipping it. - Lazer Brody] The prophet says, "To whom can you compare Me? To what am I equal? Says the Holy One." (Yeshaya [Isaiah] 40:25) If He would be a physical body He would be comparable to physical bodies. In all places where the Holy Scriptures speak of Him in physical terms, as walking, standing, sitting, speaking and anything similar, it is always metaphorical, as our Sages of blessed memory said, "The Torah speaks in the language of men". Our sages have discussed this issue at length.

This third foundation is referred to when [the Torah] says, "For you did not see any form" (Devarim [Deuteronomy] 4:15), in other words, you did not perceive Him as being

an entity with a form because, as we mentioned, He is not physical and His power is not physical.

The Fourth Foundation is that He is first. This means to believe that the One was the absolute first and everything else in existence is not first relative to Him. There are many proofs to this in the Holy Scriptures.

This Fourth Foundation

Is referred to in the verse, "That is the abode of G-d the first" (Devarim [Deuteronomy] 33:27).

The Fifth Foundation

Is that it is proper to serve Him, blessed be He, to ascribe to Him greatness, to make known His greatness, and to fulfill His commandments. We may not do this to any lesser being, whether it be one of the angels, the stars, the celestial spheres, the elements, or anything formed from them. For all these things have predetermined natures and have no authority or control over their actions. Rather, such authority and control is G-d's. Similarly, it is not proper to serve them as intermediaries in order that they should bring us closer to G-d. Rather, to G-d Himself we must direct our thoughts, and abandon anything else.

This fifth foundation is based in the prohibition against idolatry about which much of the Torah deals.

The Sixth Foundation

Is prophecy. That is, that a person must know that there exists amongst mankind individuals who have very lofty qualities and great perfection; whose souls are prepared until their minds receive perfect intellect. After this, their human intellect can then become attached to the Active Intellect [i.e. the 'mind', so to speak, of G-d] and have bestowed upon them an exalted state. These are the prophets and this is prophecy.

A full explanation of this foundation would be very lengthy and it is not our intent to bring proofs for every foundation or to explain how we know them, for that is the sum of all knowledge. Rather, we are simply mentioning them in an informal manner.

There are numerous verses in the Torah which attest to the prophecy of the prophets.

The Seventh Foundation

Is the prophecy of Moshe (Moses) our Teacher, may he rest in peace. This means to believe that he is the father of all the prophets, both those that preceded him and those who arose after him; all of them were below his level. He was the chosen one from all of Mankind, for he attained a greater knowledge of the Blessed One, more than any other man ever attained or ever will attain. For he, may he rest in peace, rose up from the level of man to the level of the angels and gained the exalted status of an angel. There did not remain any screen that he did not tear and penetrate; nothing physical held him back. He was devoid of any flaw, big or small. His powers of imagination, the senses, and the perceptions were nullified; the power of desire was separated from him leaving him with pure intellect. It is for this reason that it is said on him that he could speak to HaShem, blessed be He, without the intermediary of angels.

It is my desire to clarify this wondrous topic, and to open the sealed verses of the Torah; to explain the idea of the verse "mouth to mouth" (BaMidbar [Numbers] 12:8) and

similar verses. However, as I see it, this subject would require many proofs and great length, involving numerous presentations, introductions and illustrative examples. We would first have to clarify the existence of the angels and the distinction between their greatness and the Creator, HaShem, blessed be He. We would also have to clarify the subject of the soul and its powers. The discussion would then have to be widened to speak of the forms which the prophets see representing the Creator and the angels, and this

would bring us into the subject of the Divine Stature [a kabalistic concept involving the anthropomorphic metaphor - Lazer]. Even this would not suffice, even if the discussion would be

kept as short as possible it would still be an essay of a hundred pages. Therefore I will leave this discussion for another place, either in a book of discourses which I plan to write, or for a book on prophecy which I am working on, or for a book in which I will explain these foundations.

So, I now return to the subject of the seventh foundation. The prophecy of Moshe Rabbeinu (Moses our Teacher) is distinguished from the prophecies of all other prophets in four regards:

First, every other prophet received the word of HaShem through an intermediary, Moshe did not have an intermediary, as it says, "Mouth to mouth I speak to him." (BaMidbar [Numbers] 12:8)

Second, all other prophets only receive their prophecy either when they are sleeping, as we find in numerous places "in a dream at night" (B'Reishis [Genesis] 20:3) and "in a vision at night" (Iyov [Job] 33:15) and many other examples. Or by day when a trance has fallen over them which removes all their senses and leaves their mind open as in a dream. Such a state [of prophecy] is called a vision or seeing and is referred to as "Divine visions" (Yechezkel [Ezekiel] 8:3). Moshe received his prophecy by day as he stood before the kruvim (cherubim), as is testified to by HaShem, blessed be He, "and I will commune with you there" (Shemos [Exodus] 25:22). And as HaShem, blessed be He, states, "If prophets are among you then I, HaShem, make myself known to them through a vision, in a dream I speak to him. It is not so with my servant Moshe, he is trusted in all my house. I speak to him mouth to mouth, in a vision without puzzlement. He gazes at the image of G-d." (BaMidbar [Numbers] 12:6-8)

Third, when a prophet receives prophecy, even though it was only a vision and by means of an angel, he would nevertheless be weakened by it and his body would shudder. He would be stricken with a very great fear almost to the point that his spirit would leave his body, as Daniel said when [the angel] Gavriel (Gabriel) spoke to him, "No strength

remained in me; my robustness changed to pallor, and I could retain no strength... and I was in a deep sleep upon my face, and my face was to the ground". And as he says later, "during the vision my joints shuddered and I could retain no strength". (Daniel 10:8-9, 16). But Moshe, may he rest in peace, was not so, rather, the word came to him and he did not experience trembling and shivering in any way, as it says, "And HaShem spoke to Moshe face to face, as a man speaks to his friend" (Shemos [Exodus] 33:11). In other words, just as a man does not experience trembling from the speech of his fellow, Moshe did not tremble from the word even though it was face to face. This was due to his total attachment to the intellect, as we said earlier.

Fourth, all the [other] prophets were unable to receive prophecy when they willed it but only when HaShem, blessed be He, wished it. The prophet could wait days or years and prophecy would not come. He could beseech HaShem, blessed be He, to make known to him a matter through prophecy and then he could wait for days or months for the prophecy, sometimes it would never come at all. There were groups which would prepare themselves and purify their thoughts, as Elisha did, as it is written, "Now bring me a musician", and prophecy came upon him. But it was not certain that prophecy would come at the time a person prepared himself. Moshe, may he rest in peace, [could

prophesize] at any time he wished. As he said, "Wait and I will hear what HaShem has commanded you" (BaMidbar [Numbers] 9:8) and as it says, "Speak to Aharon your brother, he shall not come at all times in the holy place" on which our Sages of blessed memory said, "Aharon could not enter, but this did not apply to Moshe".

The Eighth Foundation

Is that the Torah is from Heaven. This means that we must believe that this entire Torah, which was given to us from Moshe Our Teacher, may he rest in peace, is entirely from the mouth of the Almighty. In other words, that it all was conveyed to him from G-d, blessed Be He, in the manner which is called, for lack of a better term, "dibur" - "speech". [Since G-d does not actually "speak" in a literal sense. - Lazer] It is not known how it was conveyed to him, except to Moshe, may he rest in peace, to whom it was given, and he was like a scribe writing from dictation, and he wrote all the incidents, the stories, and the commandments. Therefore [Moshe] is called "mechokek" - "scribe" (BaMidbar [Numbers] 21:18).

There is no difference between [verses such as] "And the children of Cham were Kush and Mitzrayim" (B'Reishis [Genesis] 10:6), "And the name of his wife was Meheitaveil" (ibid. 36:39), and "And Simnah was a concubine" (ibid. 36:12) and [verses such as] "I am HaShem your G-d" (Shemos [Exodus] 20:2) and "Hear O Israel ..." (Devarim [Deuteronomy] 6:4), for all of the Torah is from the mouth of the Almighty and it is all the Teaching of G-d (Toras HaShem), perfect, pure, holy, and true. One who says that verses and stories like these [in the first group] were written by Moshe out of his own mind, behold! He is considered by our Sages and Prophets as a heretic and a perverter of the Torah more than all other heretics, for he believes that the Torah has a "heart" and a "shell" [i.e. an meaningful part and a meaningless part] and that these historical accounts and stories have no benefit and are from Moshe our Teacher, may he rest in peace. This is the meaning of [the category of heretic who believes that] "The Torah is not from Heaven" [which is listed in the Mishnah (Sanhedrin 10:1) as one who has no share in the World to Come]. Our Sages, may their memory be a blessing, explain that this is [even] someone who says that the entire Torah is from the Almighty except for a particular verse which was written by Moses alone. And on this [person, the Torah writes], "For he has scorned the word of G-d... [his soul shall be absolutely cut off, his sin is upon him]" (BaMidbar [Numbers] 15:31). May G-d, blessed be He, forgive the statements of the heretics.

In truth, however, every word of the Torah has within it wisdom and wonders for one who can understand them, and the full depth of their wisdom can never be attained. "Its measure is longer than the earth, and broader than the sea" (Iyov [Job] 11:9). A man has option but to follow in the footsteps of King David, the anointed of the G-d of Yakov (Jacob), who prayed, "Open my eyes, that I may behold wondrous things in your Torah" (Tehillim [Psalms] 119:18).

All this is also true for the explanation of the Torah, which was also received from the mouth of the Almighty [the Oral Torah]. The manner in which we today make the Sukkah, Lulav, Shofar, Tzitzis, Tefillin, and other items is precisely the manner that G-d, blessed be He, instructed Moshe, who then instructed us and Moshe was reliable in relating [G-d's word].

The verse which teaches this foundation is "And Moshe said, "Through this you shall know that G-d has sent me to do all these things, for they are not from my heart." (BaMidbar [Numbers] 16:28)

The Ninth Foundation

Is the transcription, meaning that this Torah, and no other, was transcribed from the Creator and we may not add to it or remove from it, not in the Written Torah or in the Oral Torah, as it says, "you shall not add to it, nor diminish from it" (Devarim [Deuteronomy] 13:1). We have already fully clarified this foundation in the introduction to this work [the Commentary on the Mishnah].]

The Tenth Foundation

Is that G-d, blessed be He, knows the actions of mankind and does not turn His eyes from them. Not like the opinion of those who say, "...[The L-rd does not see us;] the L-rd has forsaken the land" (Yechezkel [Ezekiel] 8:12). But rather like it says, "Great in counsel, and mighty in work; for your eyes are open upon all the ways of the sons of men; to give to every one according to his ways, and according to the fruit of his doings" (Yirmiyah (Jeremiah) 32:19), "And G-d saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth..." (B'reishis (Genesis) 6:5), and "And the L-rd said, Because the cry of Sodom and Gomorrah is great..." (ibid. 18:20). These verses teach us this tenth foundation.

The Eleventh Foundation

Is that G-d, blessed be He, gives reward to one who obeys the commandments of the Torah and punishes one who violates its prohibitions. The greatest reward is the World to Come, and the greatest punishment is kareis (spiritual excision, "cutting off"). We have

already said enough on this topic [earlier in the Commentary]. The verse which teaches this foundation is [when Moshe says to G-d], "And now, if you will forgive their sin; and if not, please remove me [from your book which you have written]" to which G-d responds, "..Whoever has sinned against me, him will I blot from my book" (Shemos Exodus) 32:32-33). This indicates that He knows the servant and the sinner, to give reward to this one and punishment to the other.

The Twelfth Foundation

Is the time of the Mashiach (literally, "the anointed"). This means to believe and be certain that he will come, and not to think that he is late in coming, "if it seems slow, wait for it; [because it will surely come, it will not come late]" (Chabakuk 2:3). You should not set a time for him, and you should not make calculations in Scripture to determine the time of his coming. The Sages say, "Let despair come upon those who calculate end-times." [This foundation further includes] to believe that he (Mashiach) will possess advantages, superiority, and honor to a greater degree than all the kings that have ever existed, as was prophesied regarding him by all the prophets, from Moshe, peace be upon him, till Malachi, peace be upon him. One who doubts this or who minimizes his greatness denies the Torah that testifies explicitly to [the coming of Mashiach] in the account of Bilaam (BaMidbar [Numbers] 24) and in the portion of Netzavim (Devarim [Deuteronomy] 30:3-5). Included in this principle is that there is no king to the Jewish people except from the House of David and the seed of Solomon alone. Anyone who disagrees with [the status of] this family denies G-d and His prophets.

The Thirteenth Foundation

Is the resurrection of the dead. This has already been explained [earlier in the Commentary]. [The following is a translation of what Rambam writes on this subject: The resurrection of the dead is a foundation from the foundations of Moshe our Teacher, may peace be upon him. There is no faith and no connection to the Jewish religion for one who does not believe this. But the resurrection is only for the righteous. And so we find the Sages teach, "The rains are for the righteous and the wicked, and the resurrection of the dead is for the righteous alone."]

Footnotes

1.The text of the Principles below is based on Maimonides' elucidation of these Principles (in his preface to his commentary on the chapter Chelek of tractate Sanhedrin). In many circles this text is recited at the conclusion of the daily morning prayers.

Some of the biblical sources below are referenced by Maimonides himself. For some of the principles (5, 6, 12 and 13) he doesn't provide the biblical source, as such they are based on my conjecture. (For some, Maimonides provides multiple sources; I have sufficed with citing one or two of them.)

2.Maimonides explains (in his Laws of the Foundations of the Torah) how belief in G-d, an imperative expressed in this verse, necessarily implies that He is the "Creator and Guide of all created beings, and that He alone has made, does make, and will make all things."

3.In Maimonides' work, this principle does not include the idea that G-d is also "the last." Nevertheless, this idea, which was added to the universally accepted liturgical text of the Principles, is based on numerous verses in the Torah, including Isaiah 44:6: "So said G-d, the King of Israel and his Redeemer, the Lord of Hosts, 'I am first and I am last...'"

4.See the context of this verse in Numbers, where G-d explains how Moses is greater than all other prophets. See also Deuteronomy 34:10: "And there was no other prophet who arose in Israel like Moses."

5.In Maimonides' work, this principle does not include the idea that G-d will never give another Torah, rather it is limited to the belief that we can never add or subtract from the Torah.

6.Maimonides doesn't cite a verse to support the concept of reward for good deeds, but this theme is expressed many times throughout the Torah, specifically in the book of Deuteronomy.