

As Progressive Jews, we recognise the Divine image in every human being. Human dignity doesn't have limitations. As much as we do not discriminate race, social/economical background, and skin colour, we must also uphold the rights of every person who is identifying as

Lesbian, Bi-sexual, Gay, Trans, Queer, Hetero, or even not within any of those terms. As early as in the Talmud, our sages have recognised at least 7 genders, teaching us that gender-identity is more than two options*.

More Than Just Male and Female: The Seven Genders in Classical Judaism

It's very easy to assume that Judaism is an exclusively gender-binary religion. Almost all of the common traditional laws are based on the assumed differences between males and females. We see it in assumed gender roles, in liturgy, in proscribed family responsibilities, and in both our secular and religious laws.

If, however, we look just a bit deeper into our sacred texts, we see that a simple male/female binary is not only cumbersome, it's wholly inaccurate. This following description is from Rabbi Elliot Kukla

- **Zachar/זָכָר**: This term is derived from the word for a pointy sword and refers to a phallus. It is usually translated as “male” in English.
- **Nekeivah/נִקְבָּה**: This term is derived from the word for a crevice and probably refers to a vaginal opening. It is usually translated as “female” in English.
- **Androgynos/אַנְדְּרוֹגִינוֹס**: A person who has both “male” and “female” sexual characteristics. 149 references in Mishna and Talmud (1st-8th Centuries CE); 350 in classical midrash and Jewish law codes (2nd -16th Centuries CE).
- **Tumtum/טוּמְטוּם**: A person whose sexual characteristics are indeterminate or obscured. 181 references in Mishna and Talmud; 335 in classical midrash and Jewish law codes.

- **Ay'lonit/איילונית:** A person who is identified as “female” at birth but develops “male” characteristics at puberty and is infertile. 80 references in Mishna and Talmud; 40 in classical midrash and Jewish law codes.
- **Saris/סריס:** A person who is identified as “male” at birth but develops “female” characteristics as puberty and/or is lacking a penis. A saris can be “naturally” a saris (**saris chamah**), or become one through human intervention (**saris adam**). 156 references in mishna and Talmud; 379 in classical midrash and Jewish law codes.

Source: <https://goo.gl/iSKuEG>