

Below is a very quick executive summary of each song on the [Sparks album](#);
for a bit more detail, please skip to the second page

SONG SOUNDFILE	ONE-LINER SUMMARY
2 Jews, 3 Opinions	dynamics of diverse opinions
Shabbos Keeps the Jews	dynamics of Shabbat practice(s)
Lights Lead Home	Crypto-Jewish composite experience
Kind	allegory for dietary practices
Max (The Bark Mitzvah Song)	Jewish coming-of-age (canine view)
7 Circles	a mathematical motif
Sparks	Lurianic Kabbalah
2 Pockets	our importance and impermanence
Feathers	perils of gossip
Temples	baseless hatred
Spiritual Not Religious	a cultural Jew's view
Tearin' the Sea	soulmate search
The Best	faithfulness in the face of the unfathomable
One-Way Train	a piece of hope amidst unspeakable darkness
Stack the Stones	post-Shoah Eastern Europe
Right Messiah	response to supersessionist evangelism
Nothing in Between	direct connections
Deep and Wide	best of all approaches
Rowboat	interdependence
Bruria	sharp female sage of the Talmud
Letters	unlearned but heart-filled spirituality
Everyone	universal success
The Stone	Rabbi Akiva's watershed moment
Give Thanks	gratitude

Above is a very quick executive summary of each song on the [Sparks album](#);
for a bit more detail, please skip to the second page...

SONG SOUNDFILE	SUMMARY and RELATED TEXT (most on www.sefaria.org)
2 Jews, 3 Opinions	Using a popular cultural quip to explore how our diverse opinions are strengths when we argue constructively, seeking truth rather than victory; featured in Israeli Journal of Humor Research ; Erubin 13b, Genesis 1:28-29, Numbers 16, Pirkei Avot 5:17, Menachot 33a
Shabbos Keeps the Jews	Quip by cultural Zionism founder Asher Ginsberg (Ahad Ha'am): musing what transcends varied approaches to Shabbat practice; New Mexico Music Awards Finalist for Best Bluegrass Song
Lights Lead Home	Jewish ritual can awaken what's within, as it has for many descendants of Anusim (Crypto-Jews) forced by the Spanish Inquisition to flee, hide, or forsake their faith. A composite of experiences of B'nei Anusim I've known from my time in El Paso (which has an Anusim Center), this song was featured in a national resource guide , a museum exhibit, the Spring/Summer 2020 HaLapid , a video , and podcast .
Kind	Dietary practices (Deuteronomy 14:3-21, Genesis 9:4, Leviticus 17:10-14) have allegorical kindness rationale from first-century BCE philosopher Philo of Alexandria's <i>The Special Laws IV</i> (103, 107, 108, 111, 116) and <i>On the Virtues</i> (133-144); featured by KosherToday and Opera UTEP
Max (The Bark Mitzvah Song)	Jewish coming-of-age from canine view; Exodus 11:4-7 & 24:7, Pirkei Avot 4:2 & 6:1; my related letter in the Jan./Feb. 2020 <i>Moment</i> responds to this piece ; New Mexico Music Awards WINNER for Best Humorous Song! Featured in Israeli Journal of Humor Research
7 Circles	Poetic reflections on a mathematical motif in Judaism; Joshua 6:15-20, Exodus 23:10-12
Sparks	Atmospheric anthem inspired by Kabbalah, which charges us to free and reunite trapped sparks of the Divine Light by transforming ourselves and repairing the world; Genesis 1:27; Zohar (I, 2a, 15a); New Mexico Music Awards Finalist for Best Religious Song. Watch video!
2 Pockets	Chassidic rabbi Simcha Bunem (1765-1827) of Peshischa suggests we find balance by recalling both our importance and impermanence; his proverb was featured at a nationally-televised town hall from a recent Presidential election year; Mishnah Sanhedrin 4:5, Sanhedrin 37a, Genesis 18:27
Feathers	Parable (some attribute to R. Levi Yitzhak of Berdichev) illustrates why careful speech is crucial; Leviticus 19:16, Arakhin 15b
Temples	What doomed the Second Temple in the year 70 still looms today; Gittin 55b-58a, Yoma 9b
Spiritual Not Religious	This increasingly popular label fit my 20s self; Featured in Israeli Journal of Humor Research ; audience recording from 2018 Yom HaShir
Tearin' the Sea	My improbable story validates the Talmud's metaphor for how hard it is to find a soulmate; Sotah 2a; Sanhedrin 22a; Psalm 136:13; Bereshit Rabbah 68:4; Zohar; Megillah 10b; Exodus 15:20-21 & 14:22
The Best	Like trying to grasp a movie in the middle, we don't always see how barriers may yield blessings in a bigger picture; life lessons in travels of Rabbi Akiva featured by The Jewish Educator and Opera UTEP
One-Way Train	Written after reading <i>Night</i> by Elie Wiesel OBM; sadly salient now as survivors dwindle and anti-Semitism and Holocaust denial rise; picked for an NEA Big Read event
Stack the Stones	Set in post-Shoah Eastern Europe; Genesis 35:20, Numbers 19:11, Psalm 18:3
Right Messiah	A song on why Jews believe the Messiah hasn't yet come that I wish I'd had in college when confronted with supersessionist evangelism whose approach offended even many Christian classmates. Isaiah 2:4, Zechariah 14:9, Isaiah 11:11-12, Jeremiah 23:8 & 33:18; Jeremiah 23:5; Deuteronomy 29:28, Avot d'Rabbi Natan 31b
Nothing in Between	Distinctive ways we connect; Exodus 20:3, Psalms 145:18, Genesis 1, Deuteronomy 5:3, Exodus 19:2 Rashi, Kedushat HaYom (Shabbat Mincha Amidah), Mechilta d'Rabbi Yishmael 19:2:10
Deep and Wide	Pirkei Avot 4:1 tells us that a wise person learns from everyone and I've been inspired enough by friends and relatives with diverse Jewish practices to refuse to settle for a faith that's not deep <i>and</i> wide; Deut.5:3
Rowboat	parable (15 centuries old) of interdependence (Midrash Rabbah Vayikra 4:6) extended to our environmental crisis; featured in The Jewish Educator , Hadassah , and a 2023 art gallery exhibition
Bruria	Tribute to a top (female) sage of the Talmud; Pesachim 62b, Tosefta Keilim Metsia 1:3, Brakhot 10a, Midrash Proverbs 31:2, Hilchot Talmud Torah 1:13, Def Shevui & Rashi on Avodah Zarah 18b:4, Brakhot 10a, Erubin 53b-54a; chosen for a gender studies conference and gallery exhibit
Letters	encounter of unlettered but deeply spiritual person affirms that a humble open heart matters most
Everyone	Popular culture makes us feel few have room to succeed, but Pirkei Avot 4:1 opens success to all!
The Stone	Rabbi Akiva's watershed moment launched his great (mid-life) learning; Job 14:19, Avot d'Rabbi Natan 6:2, Bava Kamma 82a
Give Thanks	Blessed with a wonderful son Yehuda, I especially appreciate how an attitude of gratitude is in the nature – and name – of a Jew (<i>Yehudi</i>); Brakhot 60b, Genesis 29:35, Menachot 43b