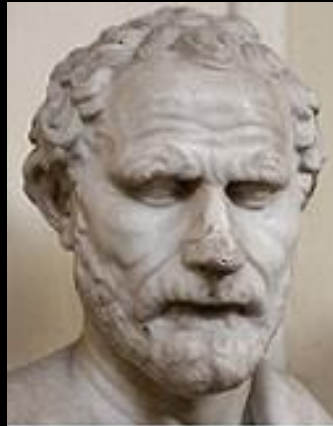


# A Conversation Between a Greek & Hebrew

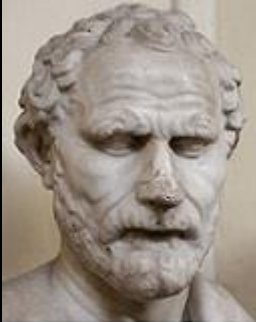
## In the Hellenic Age of Syro-Palestine



Greek



Hebrew



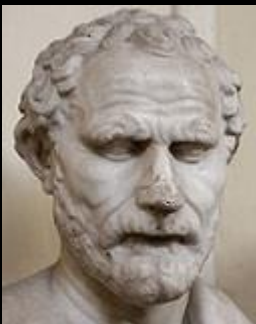
Greek

*So tell us about your gods, Mr. Maccabee.*



Hebrew

Um, that's singular.



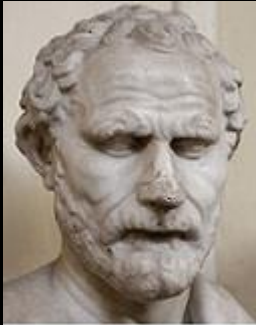
Greek

*Okay, tell ME about your gods.*



Hebrew

No, not you. G-d. G-d is singular. Only one god.



Greek

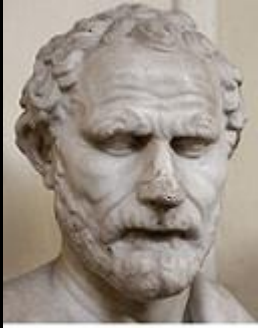
*Don't worry, we've got so many I'm sure we can spare a few.*



Hebrew

That's okay, one is enough.





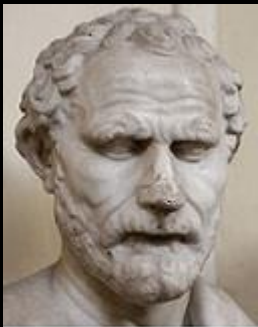
Greek

*So, this one God, what does He look like? We'd love to make some nice statues for you. You poor, uncultured people, you have no statues!*



Hebrew

*That's because He doesn't have looks.*



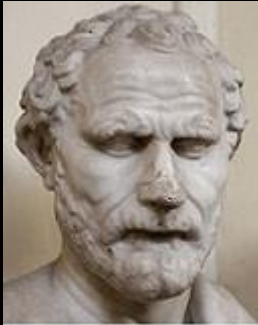
Greek

*No looks? Ugly? That's weird! A god of ugliness! Don't worry, we can make ugly statues, too.*



Hebrew

No, no. He has no looks at all. You can't see Him.



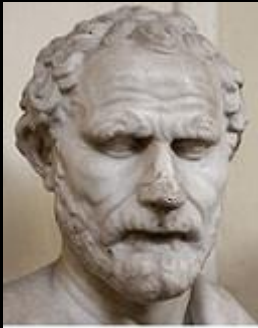
Greek

*An invisible God? Well, maybe we can do that in glass. But you have to give us some description.*



Hebrew

Nope. Sorry. No description.



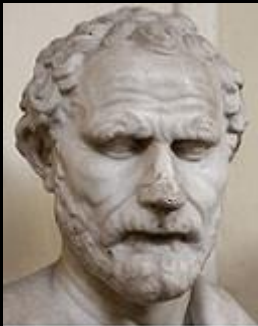
Greek

*You mean nobody ever saw him? How can you worship something if you don't know what it looks like? I mean, how do you know he exists in the first place and furthermore, how do you know if it's really him and not some imposter?*



Hebrew

*It's not that we don't know what He looks like. He doesn't have any looks. He has no image. We know it's Him because He has told us about Himself.*



Greek

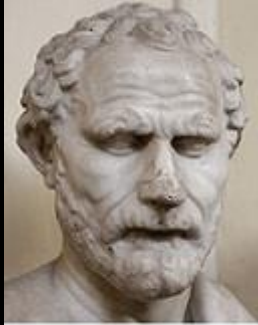
*Well, I'm sorry then. If He has no image, we can't make a statue.*





Hebrew

That's fine with us.



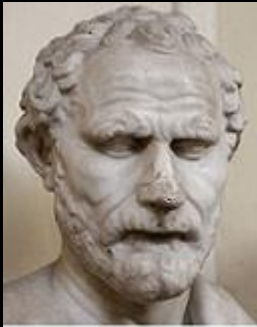
Greek

*But we'd like to write books about him. So just give us some definition and we'll work around it.*



Hebrew

Oh, our G-d can't be defined.



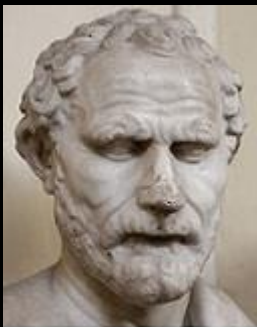
Greek

*Come, now. Everything has to have a definition. Or else it's not a thing.*



Hebrew

*But G-d is not a thing. He creates things. But He isn't a thing.*



Greek

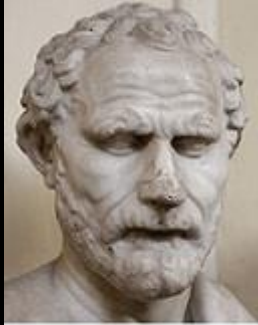
*Oh! So he is the Cosmic Mind who conceives and shapes all forms from the primal essence-matter.*





Hebrew

No, He doesn't just form them, He creates them. Out of nothing.



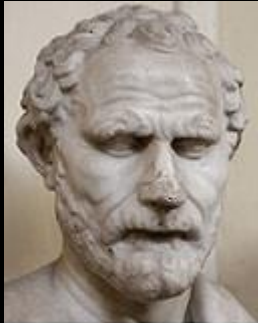
Greek

*Now you're getting silly. You can't make something out of nothing. You need stuff to make something.*



Hebrew

But there wasn't any stuff when things began.



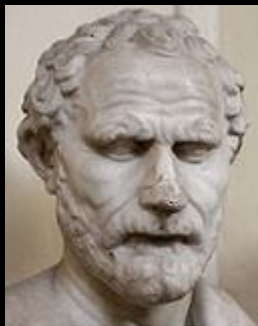
Greek

*There was always stuff. How else could the Cosmic Mind make anything?*



Hebrew

*Out of nothing!*



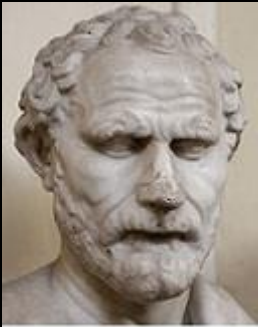
Greek

*Look, you Jews don't really think straight. But that's okay. We've conquered all sorts of people and cultures. You'll learn, too. So, you worship the Cosmic Mind — you Jews will get along fine with Aristotle and...*



Hebrew

No, He's not just the Cosmic Mind.



Greek

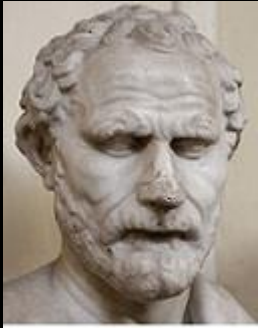
*Well, nothing's higher than the Cosmic Mind.*



Hebrew

Because that's not who He is. I mean, even if He didn't make a world, He would still be G-d. So you can't say, "that's who He is — the One that makes a world." There doesn't have to be a world for Him to exist.





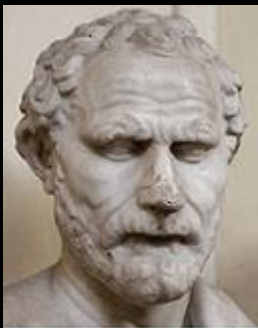
Greek

*What!?! Of course there has to be a world. Otherwise, why is there a world if there doesn't have to be one? The world makes sense. The Cosmic Mind makes sense. That's what it's all about. Reason. The highest and most perfect of all things. We Greeks will teach you all about that. Now tell me about your rituals. We Greeks really dig rituals. Any that have to do with wine? Parties?*



Hebrew

*Sure, we make kiddush on Friday night to commemorate the Creation of the world from nothing.*



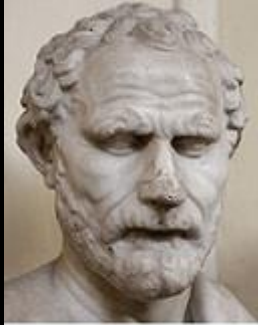
Greek

*Well, you can give up that one now, since I've just shown you that creation of the world from nothing makes no sense whatsoever. What else?*



Hebrew

We don't eat milk with meat.



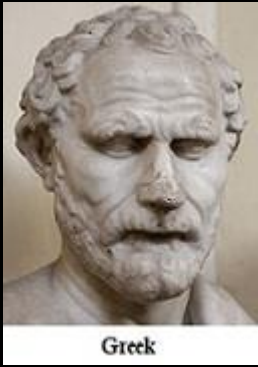
Greek

*Why not?*



Hebrew

G-d says so.



Greek

*For what reason?*



Hebrew

Reason? He needs a reason? For the same reason He created heaven and earth!



Greek

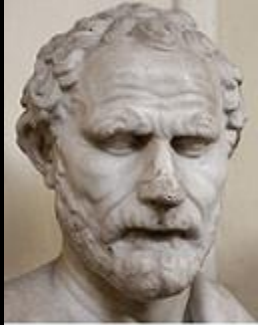
*Which is?*





Hebrew

He just wanted to.



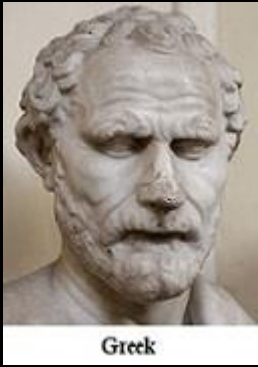
Greek

*That's not a reason! That's absence of order and pattern. But we know patterns and order exist!*



Hebrew

Sure it's a reason. G-d decided He would like a world where there would be milk and meat and He would tell people, "Don't eat that milk and meat together!" and they would listen.



Greek

*That makes no sense. That's not a reason! That sounds like a puppeteer with his puppets.*



Hebrew

*"Reason" is just another of His creations.*



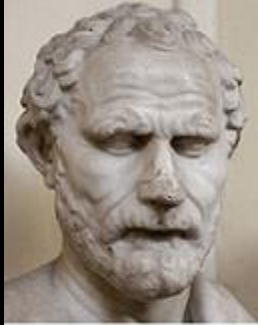
Greek

*Reason and logic are the ultimate principles of learning, understanding, and communicating! There is nothing higher!*



Hebrew

Okay then, explain to me why the world is the way it is. Why does  $1 + 1 = 2$ ? Why does the square of the length of the hypotenuse equal the sum of the squares of the lengths of the other two sides? Why do parallel lines never meet?



Greek

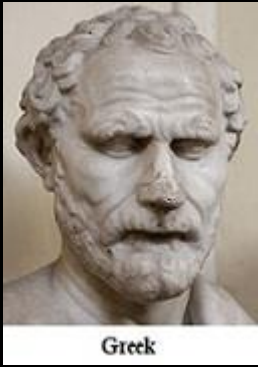
*Because those are the rules of geometry!*



Hebrew

So why does the Cosmic Mind, as you call Him, have to follow your rules of geometry?





*They're not our rules! They are self-evident truths within nature.*



*Why are these the truths and not something else?*

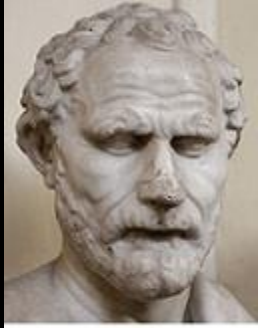


*You strange Jew! Because they are rules of geometry and they are repeatable with the same results every time.*



Hebrew

I'll bet you He could break them. I'll bet our G-d could make a world where parallel lines meet. He could break any of the laws of nature.



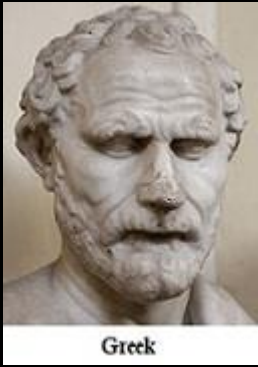
Greek

*You can't break laws of nature! They're not like laws of the state or like your silly laws about food. They are geometric principles. They are repeatable. They are repeatable principles of reality.*



Hebrew

Nothing has to be. Nothing but the Source of Being. But G-d could be any way He wants.



Greek

*Geometric principles exist. The Sun always rises and sets every day. Water always flows downward. Man is born, lives, and dies. These are principles of reality we all witness and know to be truths.*



Hebrew

*Why?*



Greek

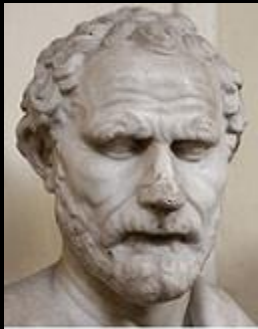
*Why?! Because if they are not, then you and I and this world have no real substance! And that is not true!*





Hebrew

That's just what I was trying to tell you. This world has no real substance. The only truth is...



Greek

*Stop! Don't say it, Mr. Maccabee! You people are downright dangerous with your make-believe world.*

When an armed revolt broke out in Jerusalem between High Priest Jason/Jesus and ascending Priest Menelaus, Antiochus IV clamped down harshly on Jewish liberties, thus starting the Maccabean Revolt. This escalated anti-Semitism and firmly embedded Roman disgust against the Jews.