

T.G.

It's funny how life can change course. One day you're planning a vacation, and the next day you hear from old friends you haven't seen in years, and there goes your vacation plan. Life seems to change direction at times, leaving you to wonder, "What's going to happen next?"

Where are the answers to life's questions?

The scholars, our wonderful professors, and our educators tell us where to look, each according to their special subjects. But where do they look when *they* need answers? Modern scientists are always searching for new answers somewhere, but when they have questions about life, where do they look? Clearly, all of the denominations all over the world will tell you they have the answers, but where do they look for answers, and could they be imposters? It seems unreasonable that there would be no place to find true answers. After looking, searching and not finding, is one left asking, "Is that all there is?"

Over 2300 years ago, the great philosopher and teacher Aristotle sent a letter to Alexander the Great. He wrote, "The axioms of philosophy are truly arbitrary. Therefore, my dear student Alexander, if I had the power to collect all the books I have written, I would burn them... I am writing this letter to tell you that the great majority of my theories regarding natural law are false. While nature does exist, G-d is the L-rd of the universe, and He directs all things as He sees fit... King Solomon was one of the greatest geniuses of all times. A scholar showed me that in many places, King Solomon warned against wasting time on philosophical speculation... but by the time you receive this letter, I will be dead and buried."

When a door in life closes, a window of opportunity may open. Perhaps there are more choices than one realizes. But choice itself is not the point. Rather, making the *right* choice is what counts. How do we know what is the correct choice? Is there something like a "choice book" that will tell us which way to turn?

All of a sudden, a person may be trying to recall something that was heard, perhaps from one's parents or teachers or friends. After all, where can somebody learn to make the right choice? Is the right choice made because it looks good? Well, you can't judge a book by its cover. Maybe by its sound? But sounds can be deceiving. Perhaps by its taste? But just because something tastes good, it doesn't mean that it's good for you. So how do we know if we're making the right choice?

We could imagine what would happen if someone young and questioning happened to ask this to just the right person. Maybe like this...

Imagine a conversation between an old man and a young student in his teens or twenties. The place was a park in a large city. It was summer, and the days were long. Beautiful trees provided shade and a cool place over a park bench for a long conversation. A well-dressed elderly man was sitting on the bench reading a book. A young man passing by sat down, pulled out a sandwich from a small brown paper bag and started to eat. Every so often he glanced at the old man, who seemed to be entirely engrossed in his book. The young man wondered what he could be reading that had taken him into another world.

As the young man finished his sandwich, he looked over and asked, "Hey Mister, what are you reading?"

The old man didn't answer. A couple of minutes later, he asked again, "Sir, what are you reading?"

The old man looked up at him, smiled, and said, "The Book of Life."

The young man slid a little closer to get a look at this Book of Life. All he saw were dark shiny letters that he had never seen before. "What kind of letters are they, and how can you understand them?" he asked.

The old man responded, "They're letters of ancient scripture."

"How old are they?" asked the young man.

"Around six thousand years old."

The young man responded, "I didn't know cavemen had letters and could write."

The old man laughed. "Slide a little closer, so I don't have to shout. I'll tell you about it. Before creation, so the book says, there was nothing in existence. There was just the Al-mighty."

"Who's the Al-mighty?"

"G-d, of course," said the old man.

"How do we know that's true? What proof do we have?" the young man asked.

"Hold the thought, and we'll get to that later. Let me finish giving an answer to your first question."

"OK," said the young man.

"So let's go on. The Al-mighty decided that He would create, so He looked into the Book of Life, and He created everything mankind knows today, plus much more. Why did He create? Because He wanted to share acts of kindness and goodness."

"Share with whom?" asked the young man. "You said there was just the Al-mighty."

"That's right. That's where we come in. He created people and everything we would need to live."

"How does that work?"

"It's a chain: minerals, plant-life, animals and mankind."

"Ah, now I see."

“But that’s just the beginning. Each member of the chain has a job to do.”

“What job is that?”

“Well, minerals feed plant-life, plant-life feeds animals, and animals and plants feed mankind.”

“What about the universe, and the stars? Where do they fit in?”

“All the links in our world depend on sunlight, the water cycle, and the weather, which are all driven by our sun. Our sun is part of a galaxy of stars, which is part of the universe that G-d created. He gave mankind a thirst for knowledge, so there are occupations such as astronomers, astrologists, and the scientists who invent technologies that create new fields and jobs. That provides things like work, income, new products and adventure for mankind, just to mention a few.”

“What about the food for the world and all the people who go hungry? Why do some countries have so much, and some have so little?” the young man asked. “It seems so unfair.”

The old man replied, “Aren’t you taking a lot for granted? Where does it say that every place and every person will have all that’s needed? When people work in peace and cooperation, they can develop and distribute the resources to the places where they’re lacking. Of course the Al-mighty guarantees that the world has enough resources to provide for mankind.”

“And are there conditions?” asked the young man.

“Of course. That’s why G-d created reward and punishment.”

“I guess I do take a lot for granted. I thought that everyone should get everything they need, and not that people earn rewards or become liable to punishments. How do we know what true

rewards there are, and what are the rules to get them?”

“I’m glad you asked,” said the old man. “When the Al-mighty created, He planned that only people will have freedom to choose, and He established rules for us right from the beginning. Six rules were given to Adam and Eve, and later, during Noah’s time, G-d added a seventh. It was at that time that a promise was made by G-d to Noah, setting up rules for reward and punishment, *and* that a person who messes up can tell G-d that he’s sorry and get back on the right track, and G-d will forgive. That’s why learning about these rules provides the opportunity to choose right from wrong. There are many impostors and pretenders in the world who say to do things their way. However, there’s only one right way when it comes down to the seven rules, and that is the Al-mighty’s way. *That’s* what I was reading when you sat down to eat your sandwich. Here are the rules that G-d gave mankind, so each person can earn merits that are eternal...”

1. Do not worship idols; place your belief and trust in G-d.
2. Do not blaspheme His Name; respect G-d and praise Him.
3. Do not commit murder; respect the sanctity of human life.
4. Do not have forbidden sexual relations; G-d has defined proper marriage.
5. Do not commit theft; respect other’s property.
6. Do not eat meat taken from a living animal before it died; avoid cruelty to living creatures.
7. Set up courts of law to uphold these 7 rules.

You can learn more at AskNoah.org. The reward will be never-ending for those who study and live by this Divine Code. Learning this code leads to

Random acts of kindness and goodness.

For in-depth study, the book “The Divine Code” can be ordered by mail, by email, or on the web at www.AskNoah.org or www.AskNoah.com.

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The Divine Code: The 7 Rules Behind the Movement for Random Acts of Kindness and Goodness

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