

A Message for Peace and Security

This brochure is from the non-profit organization Ask Noah International. ANI's goal is to provide education and answer questions about the non-denominational moral code that is known as the *Seven Laws for the Children of Noah*.

There has been an awakening to the need in every society for this basic moral code. The U.S. Congress unanimously stated in 1991 that these "ethical values and principles... have been the bedrock of society from the dawn of civilization, when they were known as the Seven Noahide Laws" (H.J.Res.104).

It is well-known that the strength of a nation ultimately relies on the strength of its citizens' morality, unity and faith as they support their national heritage, even in the most challenging situations, whatever those may be.

Many individuals – especially in difficult times – have or seek faith but are not looking for membership in a particular denomination. The Noahide Code of basic faith and morality is an eternal standard that everyone can recognize as G-d's will and wisdom for all people. With an awareness of this moral common denominator, members of all faiths can, if they wish, join in prayer to G-d or give support to one another.

We must stand united in times of success or challenge. By confirming your constitutional rights, you are also upholding the moral values that your nation was founded upon. In the same unanimous declaration by the U.S. Congress, it was also stated that "the most recent weakening of these principles... has resulted in crises that beleaguer and threaten the fabric of civilized society." In light of this challenge, every citizen can step up and heed the call to renew and strengthen these values, and reverse the negative trends that we have been experiencing in our time.

We must also remember that every act of goodness and kindness matters, because the good done by every person sends out ripples of goodness that have uplifting effects on the society and the whole creation.

To be a Nation Under G-d

The divine code of conduct that brings us G-d's blessings, closeness and peace for society was given to Noah, and transmitted to us by Moses:

- 1. Establish Just Laws and Courts:** Upholding a *fair, moral, and uncorrupted* legal system creates a stable society that is worthy to receive G-d's blessings.
- 2. The Prohibition of Murder and Harming:** Murder is an attack on the image of G-d in a human being. G-d requires us to respect the sanctity of human life.
- 3. The Prohibition of Theft:** G-d grants rights to property and money to all people. He knows our intentions, so cheating and deceiving amount to theft. Denial of the right to own property borders on slavery.
- 4. G-d's Boundary on Relationships:** G-d created the human desire for sexual relations, for the sake of procreation and making an inhabited and stable world. A desire for sexual relations that G-d forbids, such as incest or adultery, should not be acted upon.
- 5. Don't Eat Meat Taken From a Still-living Animal – Avoid Cruelty:** More than a dietary rule, this teaches us to treat animals humanely and not cause unnecessary pain or suffering to any creature.
- 6. The Prohibition of Idol Worship:** Everything comes from our Creator, the One G-d. Worship of any other entities separates people from G-d and each other.
- 7. The Prohibition of Cursing G-d:** Blasphemy is similar to idolatry, since it's a loss of trust in G-d. Use your gift of speech to add good to the world!

This code of Seven Noahide Laws goes with "part 2" of our mission from G-d, to do acts of kindness. In this way, we all help in bringing the world to the ultimate goodness that was prophesied in Isaiah 11:9, when "the world will be filled with knowledge of G-d."



T.G.

An Introduction to **The Divine Moral Code for All Mankind**

It is appropriate ... to reflect upon the ancient ethical principles and moral values which are the foundation of our character as a nation... the Seven Noahide Laws, a moral code for all of us regardless of religious faith.

– Proclamation by President Ronald Reagan of "National Day of Reflection" on April 4, 1982.

Morality of the 7 Noahide Laws Covers Many Aspects of Life

1. Establish Just Laws and Courts

G-d commanded Noah to establish righteous courts and punishments in Genesis 9:6, which speaks about the trial of a murderer:

“Whoever sheds the blood of man,”

(referring to the murderer)

“among man” (referring to a trial and witnesses)

“his blood shall be shed...”

(if convicted, he should receive punishment).

The Noahide Law that was later given through Moses specifies the obligation to bring law-breakers to justice in court, and there must also be law enforcement officers, correctional systems, and right to appeal. What does this mean for people who aren't judges or police officers? We must be law-abiding, and not do anything to undermine the courts, such as giving bribes or false testimony.

Though a person naturally makes judgments about others, we should judge to the side of merit and give the benefit of the doubt. Peace is better than conflict, so it is better to settle disputes by arbitration or compromise whenever possible. By extension, people must be taught civic duties and good behavior, which starts with the obligation to properly educate our children. There must be respect for authority, which begins with honoring our parents, and charitable giving is an important obligation of moral justice.

2. The Prohibition of Murder

Genesis 9:6, in which G-d commanded Noah to establish courts, also gives the prohibition of criminal murder, and by extension, injury. The continuation of the verse reveals *G-d's* reason for this law: “Whoever sheds the blood of man, among man, his blood shall be shed; *for in the image of G-d He made man.*” This teaches the important lesson that our bodies are not our own property. G-d lays claim to the sanctity of the living human body, so there is no permission from G-d for suicide, euthanasia, or self-harm. Conversely,

one should take action to save a person's life, even by any means necessary to stop an attacker.

Gossip and slander are moral equivalents to bloodshed. Such statements cause a person's face to turn red with embarrassment or white with shame, and they can injure a person's reputation.

3. The Prohibition of Theft

Theft occurs when something of value is taken without permission. The first theft happened in the Garden of Eden when Adam and Eve ate fruit from the only tree that was not permitted to them by G-d: the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil (Genesis 2:17). A person commits theft by taking something worth even less than a penny, if the owner values the item even a little bit. A stolen item must be returned, or paid for if that is accepted. If there is no possibility to repay the victim, the one who stole can give its value as charity.

4. G-d's Boundary on Relationships

Without a strong foundation, even a strong building may fall. Likewise, traditional family life and the strong bond and homemaking of husband and wife provide a strong foundation for stable societies. The boundaries that follow from Genesis 2:24 inform us about the intimate relations that G-d does not sanction. The verse states: “Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and cling to his wife, and they shall become one flesh.” Beyond this, the primary role of civil laws in this area of human relations is to add restrictions that are seen to be logical needs for the well-being of society, and to provide protection against abuse and exploitation.

5. Don't Eat Meat Taken From a Still-living Animal – Avoid Cruelty

If livestock, other land mammals, or any birds will be used for human food, G-d commanded to Noah in Genesis 9:4 that the animal must be already dead (the heart has stopped pumping) before meat is removed: “But flesh with its soul, [which is] its blood, you shall not eat.” This is the most basic degree of respect that a person must have for the animal and its soul.

This also teaches us not to inflict unnecessary pain or suffering on any creature. Blood sports like dogfights or cockfights are forbidden, as is cruelty to animals in general. G-d also told Moses that mixing His creations by mating different species of animals or grafting different species of fruit trees is forbidden.

6. The Prohibition of Idol Worship

G-d's first words to Adam, in Genesis 2:16, were a command: “And the L-rd G-d commanded Adam...” Adam was told that the main concern in life must be the authority of G-d, our Creator. This message of monotheism was taught by Abraham, who was an inspiration to several major religions. If we are blessed to enjoy freedom of religion, it gives us the merit to choose to serve G-d – Who lovingly provides all we have – and to choose not to bestow the reverence we owe to G-d upon any created thing.

7. The Prohibition of Cursing G-d

Speech has immense power. Mankind is distinguished among all creations by the power of intellect together with free choice, and an ability to choose what to say. A person should not think, “My words are of no importance.” From the negative consequences of speaking badly, you can know that there are much greater positive consequences of using your power of speech in positive ways – to improve yourself, other people, and the society you live in. A Constitution grants us the blessing of freedom of speech, but this should be joined with the motto “in G-d we trust.” This serves as an inspiration to the rest of the world, since the law that His Name must not be cursed is universal, as it says in Leviticus 24:15, “Anyone who curses G-d shall bear his sin.” The miracle of human speech should instead be used to offer thanks, praise, and prayers to G-d.

You can find more information and a list of our books at Asknoah.org, or write to SevenLaws@asknoah.org

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