



RABBI YOSEF MARCUS

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On the Google Motto: "Don't Be Evil"

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Imagine discovering a Florsheim shoebox in the Mojave Desert. You open it and find the following: a can of WD-40, an iPhone 7, and a well-worn copy of Kurt Vonnegut's *Bluebeard*. You're told those items evolved on their own, from nothingness, over billions of years of evolution. Yep.

The universe is vastly more complex than an iPhone, so the case for a Creator is not hard to make. But can we demonstrate the existence of a Creator who is interested in this world, in morality, in you and me? In many circles, especially in academia and popular media, belief in such a being is portrayed as old-fashioned and naïve.

So, believing in "God" often means going against the grain.

Yet you're considering it. Because you're wondering: If there is no Creator, or if that Creator is too busy or aloof to care, why am I searching for "meaning" and doing "good"?

Sure, it's embedded in most societies by now to not be evil, and it *feels* good to *do* good. But what makes good, good, and evil, evil? On what basis *should* I follow Google's former motto "Don't Be Evil"?

Is there a good reason to act morally and ethically other than to avoid feeling "yucky"? (Moral relativists have been trying to cure us of this aversion for millennia. Doesn't seem to be working.)

So, consider: Maybe I feel good when I do good because deep down, I know it's Good. Maybe some things feel wrong because deep down I know they're Wrong. Which means that deep down, I believe in an objective morality. Which means that deep down, I believe in a Source, a Being *from whom that morality stems*. Which means... maybe I'm not such an atheist after all?

Jews claim that objective morality – as opposed to whatever your favorite editorial page has decided on any given day – was unveiled 3,335 years ago in the Sinai desert. They say that God came to have a schmooze with an entire people, to tell the world how to live. Now if they concocted the story, why has no other religion come along with a similar tale? It's not like anybody's ever been shy about borrowing ideas. Yet every other religion claims its origin to be a revelation to one or a few people. The Sinai anomaly makes sense only if it never happened before and was never repeated.

So, what happened at the Sinai schmooze? God revealed that there's more to life than physical existence. That we are more than our physical bodies – we are souls. That to be truly happy and fulfill the purpose of our existence, we must live a life that reflects the goodness of our Creator. To respect every human life, honor our parents, to be honest, kind, and generous. To stand up to bullies and protect the vulnerable.

So, trust your instinct – God is real. And there's a piece of the Divine in your own heart.