



## **RABBI SIMON JACOBSON**

### **FOUNDER OF THE MEANINGFUL LIFE CENTER, BEST-SELLING AUTHOR, SAGE**

Rabbi Simon Jacobson is a pioneering speaker and educator, and is a mentor to thousands. He is the author of the best-selling book, *Toward a Meaningful Life*, a William Morrow publication that has sold over 400,000 copies and has been translated into 13 languages.

Rabbi Jacobson heads The Meaningful Life Center, which bridges the secular and the spiritual through a wide variety of live and online programming, presenting the universal teachings of Torah as a blueprint for life to people of all backgrounds. The MLC has over 200,000 subscribers and over 15 million views. He is also the chairman and publisher of The Algemeiner Journal.

Rabbi Jacobson is YouTube's "Rabbi of choice!" He has lectured to diverse audiences on psycho- spiritual issues and applying Jewish thought to contemporary life. His voice is rooted in the timeless teachings of Torah, yet remains profoundly relevant. His keen insight into the human condition allows him to offer his listeners clarity and direction, especially in difficult times.

# **The God You Don't Believe In**

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Before we try to prove or disprove God's existence, let's first define what and who God is. Because without an agreed-upon definition, we might not even be talking about the same entity.

In the wise words of Rabbi Levi Yitzchak of Berdichev in conversation with a self-proclaimed atheist, "*The God you don't believe in, I also don't believe in.*" If we visualize God as sitting on a throne in heaven, with a long white beard, ready to strike us with lightning when we misbehave – I too wouldn't believe in such a God!

So, what is God? Let's replace the word *God* with the word "*reality*." What is reality? Is it what I can see, touch, taste, hear, and smell with my senses? Is it something empirical? Something that makes sense logically? In part, yes – that's reality, but it goes beyond that. We experience love and heartbreak, we have ideas and beliefs – these are parts of our reality that we can't physically measure and that are not subject to our sensory tools.

We can all agree that there are aspects of reality that we cannot experience with our five senses, so we must accept that there are deeper, immeasurable dimensions. Take subatomic particles or DNA for example – nobody has ever seen them, yet they exist; they define and create our physical reality.

Sir Arthur Eddington's metaphor brings this point home: A fisherman spread his net across the seas and captured all types of fish. After documenting their species, size, color etc., he concluded that there are no fish shorter than a half inch long. His daughter then reminded him of the small goldfish swimming in their aquarium. The fisherman realized that the instrument – the net – that he had used to collect the fish had holes measuring half an inch. Hence, all of the smaller fish had fallen back into the sea. The instrument was limited. Not the fish.

Experiencing and perceiving God requires us to transcend our limited sensory tools and realize that there's a deeper reality in everything, a reality that is not subject to or defined by our limitations. Just as we can't see the widest horizons when standing in a valley, what we see with our physical eyes is only a tiny sliver of reality. When Abraham, the first monotheist, began looking for God, he realized that God couldn't be limited to the animals on earth, or even to the vast heavens above. Abraham came to understand that he was just a little piece of the whole and that it is the whole that defines the piece. God is reality.

Only when we open up ourselves to this reality will God emerge. We simply need to suspend ourselves in order to discover and recognize God.