

00:40:23 jane susswein: One of my favorite Rabbinic maxims is that one should say 100 blessings a day:-)

00:51:27 Larry Pinsker: The three letter word "God" has been a source of much confusion. Perhaps if the experiences to which this word refers were to be spelled out, some of the confusion might be cleared up. When people speak of "God" they usually refer to the experience of moral passion, attributing its source to the divine. Thus they speak of godly acts. Thus the question "Do you believe in God?" really means: do the experiences that are generally referred to when speaking of God point to a force or power beyond ourselves that is responsible for them? Are our experiences responses to a force not ourselves? Rabbi Ira Eisenstein, z'l, "A Note on the Word 'God'", The Reconstructionist, Dec. 1987

00:52:33 jane susswein: Despite the language of our prayers, I think we can feel gratitude without it being to any being.

00:53:23 Deborah Schein: I would like to hear more from Sarah about private sacredness

00:54:39 Esther Miller: Is God a "being"?

00:55:24 Florence Brammer: Yes to the power of nature: whether the night sky, landscapes or non-human animals -- to create awe.

00:57:05 Rabbi Joan Sacks: What about when people have experiences that are the direct opposite of what we are calling the divine. For example who has experienced domestic abuse? Or who has survived the Holocaust. Is it merely the absence of God? Some (eg. Christianity) believes those experience represent "the devil" that there is the existence of exactly the opposite of God. What do we call these experiences? What do or may they represent?

00:58:25 Carol Anshien: Many years ago, I redirected Kaplan's ["power that makes or salvation"] metaphor to: "G!d is the Energy that makes for Transformation.

00:58:42 Deborah Schein: this is response to Sandy's sharing about children not having opportunity to share their ideas of sacredness. I am working with a group of researchers in England who are looking at children's perceptions of religion. I would like to share their work with you if you are interested.

00:59:49 Enid Lader: Hannah Senesh's "Yeish Kochavim" -- There are stars...

01:00:33 George Kelley: Deborah we should chat about that. There are educators in the movement who are creating spaces for G?D exploration and another educator Eliana Light who is creating better language around G?D exploration in children.

01:03:24 Deborah Schein: Wonderful. The work I am referring to is done with young Catholic children in England. I find their work very thorough and very rich. I would love to continue the dialogue.

01:03:49 Rabbi Joan Sacks: Larry, what you are referring to reminds me so much of predicate theology, which I've always found I could I relate to strongly as well as Kaplan's writings about God.

01:04:54 Rabbi Joan Sacks: But, the problem of the question of is there evil remains or what is it?

01:05:16 Rabbi Joan Sacks: What does it reflect, if anything.

01:06:44 Rabbi Joan Sacks: I worked with survivors for many years. I am still

in touch with one is is now 100 years old. Her husband died at 100 last years. So, I have to take these questions very seriously.

01:11:28 Enid Lader: I am part of a congregation that was founded by NASA scientists... Somehow, they were able to hold both science and Judaism, without minimizing the importance of both.

01:15:09 Esther Miller: All in all I think that Sasha Sagan "protests too much."

01:17:10 Deborah Schein: I often felt bad for Sasha as I read her book. The book is full of naivety and lack of knowledge about Judaism.

01:17:52 Larry Pinsker: Arno Penzias received a Nobel for discovering the microwave radiation background of the cosmos. He is an Orthodox Jew. He is often asked how he reconciles his discovery with the opening of Bereshith and has no trouble doing so. .

01:20:06 Rabbi Joan Sacks: I find scientists from many religious backgrounds have no problem with religious descriptions of creation and with their scientific observations and theories. I appreciate this because they are Jewishly and often philosophically knowledgeable, but they are also scientific experts.

01:20:19 Deborah Schein: I love this idea of needing to be mess. Thank you for this Sarah!

01:21:34 Florence Brammer: I think it was Nietzsche who said something like, "With consistency a great soul has nothing to do."

01:22:16 Kaplan Center: also emerson consistency is the hobgoblin of small minds

01:23:43 Sandy Sasso: When Dennis remarked to Kaplan while he was walking him to the train in Philadelphia, Rabbi Kaplan what you said today contradicts what you said yesterday. Kaplan responded, "I, too, am evolving."

01:23:45 George Kelley: I think Florence that was Ralph Waldo Emerson, but Nietzsche would have liked it.

01:23:45 Carol Anshien: Terrific critiques and questions, Sarah, thank you.

01:24:53 Carol Anshien: Question I would ask author (not having read, yet, only from all your comments so far) .What makes anyone think that what they think (rationally) is "proof" of anything anyway?

01:25:41 Carol Anshien: Aren't our "proofs" a combination of mind, heart, body, soul.... anyway? ;-)

01:29:46 Rabbi Jacob (Jake) Best Adler (he/him/his): I was just speaking to the K-2 parents of our congregation about the bedtime Shema and the role of gratitude, awe and wonder. This strikes me as a primary motivation for scientific study as well. And there is also a suggestion that awe plays an important role in psychological wellbeing. <https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/blog/unlocking-your-potential/202112/newinsights-the-science-awe>

01:32:04 Deborah Schein: I have also seen data from neurological studies that connect feelings of awe with the development of empathy. The ideas of following rules, being moral human beings and thoughts of empathy are totally missing from this book.

01:32:44 Kevin Weidenbaum: As the "nones" continuing growing and the ultra-orthodox continuing growing, in a 100 or 200 years, there will be no secular

Jews any more.

01:33:01 Larry Pinsker: THE SCIENCE OF AWE <https://www.templeton.org/discoveries/the-science-of-awe>

01:38:14 Larry Pinsker: For a true "materialist spirituality": read Wallace Stevens' poem: "How to Live,What to Do" and then look at Sagan's book, which reads as a work of hagiography devoted to shoring up the integrity of her father's reductivism.

01:38:21 Esther Miller: It is easy for an individual to feel comfortable with an individual rabbi. That does not necessarily translate to feeling comfortable walking into a community, even those congregations described as warm and welcoming do not realize how tight and in bred they can appear to the new-comer. Perhaps we need to really take a look at that.

01:41:28 Kaplan Center: next year we will certainly have a webinar with Rabbi Toba Spitzer... her new book God Is Here..reimagining the divine

01:41:54 Kaplan Center: the book can be preordered ..will be published in March

01:43:59 margo cates: that's a great anecdote: . . . "twinkle, twinkle, little star. . . "

01:47:38 margo cates: personally, I got a lot out of saying kaddish, even if I could not translate the Aramaic word for word. So there are many, many doors and levels of approach.

01:48:36 Esther Miller: amen!

01:49:15 Carol Anshien: What makes a community Jewish if at the bottom or top is not some concept of "God" that you can even doubt and reject exists so that you can be in community and have the conversation?.

01:51:26 Larry Pinsker: "You can be spiritual without being religious and vice versa. It is almost like the distinction between love and marriage. Love is an emotion. Marriage is an institution. They are linked, but not the same." – Jonathan Sacks z'l

01:51:46 Tzemah Yoreh: Carol, the implication then is Judaism = relationship with God, which I cannot accept.

01:51:48 Rabbi Erin Hirsh: The Kaplan Center's First Book Club! For Small Creatures Such as We by Sasha Sagan with Rabbi Erin Hirsh & Dr. Deborah Schein Sasha Sagan's book FOR SMALL CREATURES SUCH AS WE: Rituals for Finding Meaning in Our Unlikely World , offers a new lens to look at the world and ourselves. We invite interested individuals to join us as we explore the book more deeply. Excerpts will be chosen to share and discuss. Questions will be asked: How do we respond to Sasha's explanation of her world? How do her words inform us as human beings and as Jews? As parents and educators? How do they propel us toward new questions? Interested? Jeffrey@kaplancenter.org

01:58:24 Carol Anshien: Tzema: Question: Is accepting of jewish community?

01:58:44 Deborah Schein: Thank you to all presenters.

01:58:51 Yaacov Kravitz: Thank you all for a wonderful program. I have to sign off now.

01:58:55 Enid Lader: Thank you for a very interesting discussion.

01:59:07 Carol Anshien: I have to leave, wonderful conversation, to be

continued...thank you...

01:59:21 Bobbi Cohen: Thank you for this wonderful program! I can't stay, and hope to see and chat with many of you at the Reconstructionist convention.

01:59:38 Tzemah Yoreh: No Carol. There is no one basis of Jewish community in my mind.

02:01:46 Rabbi Joan Sacks: Jane, is that program "Music of the SAJ"? If so, do you have a link?

02:02:11 Larry Pinsker: Thank you for a stimulating discussion and fresh insight into the hunger of the "Nones."

02:06:51 Eric Caplan: But paintings are not performed.

02:08:19 Sandy Sasso: But poems are.

02:08:21 Dr. Homer Brooks: What was besides morally compelling? The other 2?

02:08:42 Sandy Sasso: Intellectually credible and aesthetically pleasing

02:09:01 Dr. Homer Brooks: Thank you!

02:09:14 Sandy Sasso: I have a chapter coming out in a new book on Teaching Religious Naturalism to Children

02:09:27 Eric Caplan: Sandy: but would you read in public a poem that has words that you find troubling?

02:10:12 Sandy Sasso: I would not if it was morally reprehensible

02:11:43 Sandy Sasso: Thanks, Deborah. Religion obligates us where spirituality does not necessarily

02:12:12 Deborah Schein: Sandy, what is religious naturalism?

02:12:40 Barbara Stark: I think I missed information about the book club. Barbara Stark

02:13:00 Sandy Sasso: Non supernatural ways of understanding

02:15:43 margo cates: what is the date/time for the first book club and what will it be thereafter -- eg once monthly, every other month

02:19:31 Esther Miller: Secular is also up for interpretation.

02:21:22 Judith Shalitt: Buddhism, also a destination for many who were raised--and often remain--Jewish.

02:21:40 Catherine Carmel: Interesting discussion! Thank you all.