

THE TEN

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Jewish philosophers have struggled over the question of determinism versus free will. Is God's knowledge absolute and acted upon by God in every instance? Or are human beings granted a certain degree of latitude to shape their lives as they see fit?

The first-century philosopher Philo of Alexandria sought to distance himself from his Greek colleagues in asserting a strong dose of free will—that human beings are granted knowledge and with that knowledge we are obligated to choose between good and evil. Maimonides believed that human beings indeed have knowledge that they can act upon, but God has foreknowledge. The seventeenth-century Dutch

renegade Spinoza doesn't believe we have the capacity to make choices at all. Basically we live in a world programmed by the laws of nature.

So, there's a range of opinions among some of the great thinkers in the Jewish tradition about this. It reflects, at some level, a core human wisdom, which is that we all want to believe that we have some measure of control over our actions and the world around us. And we all understand that we are subject to the constraints of forces beyond our control.

in the same line. I saw the older people and children. My brother and two sisters were in the other line. The other line was people twenties to about forties. My mother kept holding my hand, pushing me, pushing me. So I went. I don't know how I sneaked out but I ended up in the other line.

My mother went to the crematorium. I wouldn't have survived. This was in August or September of 1944.

What can I say? One officer or soldier could've picked me out and pushed me back there or shot me or something. "Why did you go from this line to the other line?" Right? Which means I had luck. I would say random. This is something lucky that happened to me.

After the war, I went to Palestine. I was in the Palmach—I was sent to be an officer. I married my wife in '53, and we had two children. We came to America in 1959. The kids—we gave them a good education. My son is the president of a university. And my daughter is a social worker and case manager.

Now my wife's got Alzheimer's. I have to take care of her. I don't know why my wife got what she had. But I take it in stride. I've got to be every step with her.

On the wall we have pictures of our life when she was a teacher, teaching Hebrew. We have a big picture that says, "To Learn and to Teach" and a picture of her with children around her. When she sees all those nice things, she is back to normal. Otherwise, from second to second, she forgets.

But I take it as it comes. I give lectures about the Holocaust practically everywhere. I go every day to the gym. We go—me and my wife. I take her to exercise. This helps a lot.

Every day I play basketball. I can make five, six three-pointers in a row. I wear jerseys from all the NBA teams: San Antonio Spurs, Chicago Bulls. I go around and around and shoot three-pointers. Now the three-pointers start to get a little harder because I'm getting older. You know? But it keeps me in shape. I would say that keeps me young.

This is the story of my life. I cannot complain.