

The Reality of God

An edited version of an article which appeared in the 'Ensign Message' by Dr Peter Hammond. March 2016

“One of the most famous atheists of the 20th century, British philosopher, Bertrand Russell, wrote: “Why I am not a Christian.” When he was asked what he would say if it turned out that there was a God after all, Russell replied that he would ask the Almighty: “Why didn’t you give us more evidence?”

To the wilfully blind God seems to be absent, or even worse if He is there, he is cruel. But to those whose eyes have been opened there are abundant evidences of God in creation, in our conscience and in Jesus Christ, Titus 1:15, *‘To the pure, all things are pure, but to those who are corrupted and do not believe, nothing is pure. In fact, both their minds and consciences are corrupted.’*

God has not left Himself without a witness. There is nowhere on earth, or in the universe, where His fingerprints are absent.

Confrontation

However, we are confronted today by a most virulent and aggressive form of atheism. One of the great ironies of militant atheists is how their whole existence seems to be consumed in fighting against what they claim does not exist.

Confusion

If you have read many of these vicious atheist attacks on God you will notice how they tend to blur the distinction between Christianity and Islam. They site horrible atrocities done in the name of religion (Most of which is being done by Muslim extremists against Christians!) and then they argue that the problem is with God!

Condemnation

Firstly, it is completely unfair to blame the victims for what their persecutors have done. Secondly, these atheist writers ignore the vastly worse atrocities committed by atheists. Secular humanist, atheistic political regimes turned the twentieth century into the bloodiest century in all of history. The death toll left behind by atheist dictators such as Lenin, Stalin, Mao Tse Tung, Pol Pot, Castro and other communists exceed 160,000,000 victims. These were not soldiers killed in battle, but civilians killed in peacetime by their own governments, in the name of socialism and atheism.

Contradiction

Now, we would not want to make every atheist share the guilt of what some atheists have done to slaughter multiple millions. Neither would it be fair, or rational for any atheist to blame Protestant Christians for what intolerant Catholic regimes and Muslim extremists have done.

The Reality of God

The fact is that there is a God. He made us. He has revealed His standards of right and wrong in the Ten Commandments. We are accountable to Him. One day we will stand before Him and give an account of our lives. God is not hidden. He has been revealing His power and majesty and truth in so many ways. It is clearly seen in His creation. He has spoken through the prophets. He has spoken in and through His Son Jesus Christ, Psalm 19:1, *‘A Psalm of David. The heavens declare the glory of God, and the sky above proclaims his handiwork.’*

The Watershed Question

Just as watersheds in the great continents direct the flow of the rivers, one watershed in theology which impacts key beliefs is the question 'Is there a God?' That question is pivotal. The Bible begins, Genesis 1:1, *'In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth'*.

Atheism is based on the assumption that there is no God.

Either one believes that the world created itself or one believes in a self-sufficient Supreme Being who always was, is and always will be. Put another way, the question is: Is God self-sufficient and always existing, or is the universe self-sufficient and self-existing? Psalm 14:1, *'The fool says in his heart, "There is no God." They are corrupt, they do abominable deeds, there is none who does good.'*

The God Who Is There

Every tribe, culture and nation has an idea about God and a name for God. Everyone knows that God exists, but some people try to suppress the fact.

The whole tenor of human life is affected by whether men regard themselves as the Supreme Being in the universe, or acknowledge a Superhuman Being whom they conceive of as an object of fear or love and a force to be defied, or a Lord to be obeyed.

More than anything else, what you believe about God will make the most difference in your thoughts, your life and your eternal destiny.

The Crumbling Foundations of Atheism

One of the reasons why we are facing such a militant and aggressive assault from atheists today is because all the pillars of atheism are crumbling. At the highest intellectual levels increasing numbers of scientists are realising that, on every point atheism is an untenable position.

Facts are Stubborn Things

In 'God, the Atom and the Universe', scientist Dr James Reid declares: "Science is preparing a surprise for mankind. At least it will be a surprise for those who have doubts about the Bible and its God. It will also come as a surprise for those who are labouring under the misapprehension that science undermines the Bible. In fact it may even shock some scientists who may be startled to find that their newly uncovered facts, or accepted theory, provides still another link in the chain of evidence that is showing that the facts of the universe support the Bible's statements – including Creation."

Purpose in Design

In 1973, on the 500th anniversary of the birth of Copernicus, at a special celebration in Krakow, Poland, the birthplace of Copernicus, one of the keynote speakers was the highly respected astrophysicist Professor Brandon Carter from Oxford University. Professor Carter startled many by pointing out that physics and astronomy all seem to indicate that our world – indeed the entire universe – has been constructed and maintained for a purpose. That purpose could only be the sustaining of intelligent life on the planet.

Professor Carter noted such things as consistent symmetry in the mathematical equations for gravity and the fact that if the mass of the proton were just a fraction larger or smaller, the entire solar system would collapse. All of physics points out the fact that somehow this universe appears to have been designed for mankind. This he called the Anthropic Principle. Now, to the evolutionists, *purpose* is one of the most repugnant of words. Evolutionism insists that everything is merely an accident. To recognise purpose in creation is to acknowledge a Creator.

An Avalanche

So many other scientists have made similar discoveries and observations that one can compare it to many snowballs turning into an avalanche, which is sweeping away the pillars of evolutionism.

In the book 'The Privileged Planet', written by scientists Guillermo Gonzalez and J Richards, they document how earth has been uniquely positioned to sustain human and animal life. If the earth was any closer to the sun, temperatures would be too high for any life to survive. If we were any further away from the sun the temperatures would be too low to sustain life. The atmosphere around planet earth is absolutely unique to sustain animal life.

Celestial Mechanics

In his 5 volume work on celestial mechanics, Pierre Simon Laplace, concluded: "The proof in favour of an intelligent God as the author of Creation stands as infinity to zero against any other hypothesis of ultimate causation" It is impossible to give a greater contrast than infinity to zero. Laplace observed that it would be infinitely more probable that a set of writing implements, thrown aimlessly against a huge parchment, would produce Homers *Iliad* than that the creation originated by any other cause than an all knowing, all powerful God.

Mathematical Genius

One of the greatest astronomers of all time Sir James Jeans, observed that the more he studied the universe the more the universe appeared to him to be one gigantic thought of a great mathematician. It has meaning, symmetry and reason.

The Moon

Those scientists who recognise Intelligent Design point to many examples such as the moon. If there were no moon, there could be no life on earth. For the moon is God's appointed handmaiden for the earth. It cleans up the oceans with its tides. Without those tides, and without the moon, all our shores and bays would be filled with tons of stinking garbage and debris. No-one would want a seafront property and swimming in the sea or fishing in the sea would be unthinkable.

The moon mixes the atmosphere. Just as the gravitational pull of the moon affects the tides of the seas, it works on the atmosphere and mixes oxygen into the water as the waves break upon the shore. Upon that aerated water depends the life of the seas plankton, which provides the basis of the whole food chain without which all of the sea creatures could not survive.

Intelligent Design

For someone who believes in evolution it is inexplicable that the moon just 'accidentally' happens to be there, and 'accidentally' again happens to be just the right size and distance from the earth for all of these things to happen in such a way as to sustain life on this planet.

Nitrogen

Then consider the nitrogen in the atmosphere. The atmosphere is made up of 78% nitrogen, 21% oxygen and 1% of other components. We should consider the fact the nitrogen mixed with almost anything becomes poisonous. However, the atmospheric nitrogen around us is extraordinarily inert. What good is nitrogen? Without nitrogen there would be no plants. So, how does God get the nitrogen to mix into the soil for the plants to feed on without mixing it into the air we breathe which would kill us?

Lightning

Scientists inform us that the hundred thousand lightning strokes around the globe are essential to alter the molecular atmospheric nitrogen into compounds like ammonia and nitrates which are carried into the ground by rain. That system produces one hundred million tonnes of nitrogen plant food every year and keeps this world going. Every time we hear the thunder, and see a bolt of lightning, we should stop and think that were it not for that lightning, life would not be able to be sustained on this planet.

Dust

Scientists also point to the intelligent design in dust. To many people dust is something unpleasant, which causes sneezing and runny eyes and various allergies. Why is there such an accumulation of dust on our desks, shelves and tables? Actually, intelligent design advocates point out we should thank God for dust. If it wasn't for dust we wouldn't be alive either. One of the benefits of dust is merely cosmetic. We are informed

that the sky is not really blue, it only appears that way because of the effect of dust on light in our atmosphere. If you go 40 km straight up into the atmosphere, where there is no dust, the sky appears pitch black. Perhaps you have noticed that photographs taken from the moon show black skies. But, we are informed by the experts, dust does something more important: every drop of rain contains approximately 8 million tiny droplets of water, and each of these droplets is wrapped around a tiny speck of dust. If it wasn't for the dust it could never rain. If it never rained this whole world would turn into something like the Sahara desert and all of us would die. Everything evidences design.

The Solar System

Athanasius Kircher, a devout Christian astronomer, constructed a complex working model of the solar system showing the sun and the planets circling around it. One day he invited his atheist friend into his study to see this model. His friend was intrigued by the model's incredible complexity. He exclaimed: "How beautiful it is! Who made it?"

Kircher responded: "No one made it. It made itself!" The atheist started at him in disbelief: "That's absurd. You don't expect me to believe that! Do you?"

Kircher answered: "No. I don't. But what's even more absurd is, that's what you believe about the real solar system, which is vastly more complex than this simple model."

When we consider the complexity and magnificent design of God's Creation in the universe we can see that He is not nearly as hidden as sceptics assert.

"The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament shows His handiwork."

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