

Atheism and Genocide?

Sam Harris says that belief affects and leads to action. Atheism he says is not a belief but a lack. Thus atheism is not to blame if the atheist behaves badly and hurts people. The implication is that it is faith, faith in religion in particular, that causes evil actions. Belief is risky then whether it be in religion or not.

One criticism if that is that atheism is not a lack of belief but a belief.

Atheists say that science does only good and that is is bad science that does harm. Religionists complain that religion does not get this free pass - it is never that religion can be good or religion can be bad but the bad shows all religion is bad and bad in the sense that potentially bad is bad.

Atheists are individualists as in worldview but community members in every other way. A religion is a collective and must be judged as a collective. So "they are not all bad" is not only irrelevant but ignorant. Atheism is not to blame in any way if an atheist does harm in its name.

Religion routinely lies or implies that if atheists get political power they will use it to kill and destroy.

The logic is that if you ignore or abandon God then you merely swap him for a new God. For example, if it is not God you would die for and kill for, if thought necessary, it will be the state or your political ideology. The religious tell you that without seeing the irony. Having a God of any kind is bad if that is what happens! Love for a good God is a bad thing that is not showing its bad side or getting a chance if patriotic fanaticism can take its place! There is no qualitative difference then between the lover of God or the terrorist in love with an ideology. It is no great mandate or advert for believing in God if a God entails having an extremist fanatical and anti-life mindset. If it does not show when it is direct belief in God then that is a reason to be more uncomfortable with it not less.

There are stories that godless tyrants raged in anger against God before they died. They were not atheists after all then! Anger against God is common. But what if they felt they were better off killing people than letting them live under such a God? It does not matter if a tyrant is forced to permit evil and suffering or wills them positively. The tyrant is still a tyrant. So it is with God.

We never really can prove that atheism has killed people. It has to be admitted that some atheists fear that religion is true after all. They may see the power of God as a threat to how they want to live their lives and fear the demands God makes thus they may try to erase the thought of him by violent means. The other problem is they do not want to have to recognize the authority of creatures like Pope Benedict XVI or Jesus Christ or Muhammad or Joseph Smith.

Some "atheists" may be believers but refusing to let themselves see it. If an atheist autocrat who was a Roman Catholic had it in for Catholics more than any other religion that is a sure sign that he is struggling with the fear of God and God's allegedly one true religion. He is not the atheist he presents himself to be.

Atheists need to be solid in their non-theism.

An atheist autocrat who persecutes believers is not much of an atheist. If he was confident in his atheism and happy to be atheist he would deal with religion through educating the people. Atheism depends on knowing the right facts and having the right information. An atheist can be made to feel insecure in his atheism when surrounded by religious lies and half-truths and distortions.

The atheist autocrat might kill and maim more if he were a believer and thought the killings were part of God's plan. The religious doctrine that ultimately only God is in control and he lets us do evil only when it serves his purpose teaches exactly that - that it would be God's plan. The murderer who does it for God has to be less evil in so far as intention goes than the murderer who does not.

The persecuting atheist must not be confused with the atheist who is sick of society's religious stupidity and ignorance and is not afraid to challenge it. That is persecuting stupidity/ignorance not religion as such.

Any ideology when it gets political power can turn oppressor. Religions of peace and even atheistic systems have seemingly done that. But it is a version of atheism that does it rather than atheism itself. Nobody says, "Right, I don't believe in God and will kill whoever disagrees with me." It is more complicated than that.

Most of us day by day, have a feeling that things will be okay at least in the future. This feeling helps prevent us being consumed by the fear and trouble that grip the world. It is a switch-off to reality. Atheists and religious people both have that feeling. The religious seem to confuse it with a sense that god is looking after them. The feeling can vanish so they may use religion to get it back and maintain it. But it will come back with religion or without it for it is natural. The feeling is mistaken for godly or religious sense. Religion originates with that error.

The feeling is dangerous if you believe in God for it risks drawing you away too much from reality. You feel you will be okay and that is natural but if you boost the feeling with faith in a protective God that has its risks. If you end up feeling that a god is looking after you you may do great harm to others and yourself because you feel somehow invulnerable. The atheist will not have the religious motivation to make the feeling stronger and enjoys feeling safe but in a realistic way. The atheist then may feel a little more fearful than the believer but at least the atheist will see the harsh reality of life far better. Atheists who do great evil may not even realise that they subconsciously think there is a God who is making them invulnerable. They think, "O death and plague and suffering? They won't happen to me." They can only be that sure if they have a subliminal or subconscious belief in God.

Atheists do not form sects to kill one another. Religions do. That says something. If atheists are dangerous then we must ask if religion is more dangerous than atheism?

It is said by some that atheism does not necessarily lead to atheists committing acts of cruelty and genocide but that it leads some to do it. We could reword that as follows: It is said by some that religion does not necessarily lead to religious people committing acts of cruelty and genocide but that it leads some to do it.

Religious and atheist genocide compared

Catholicism in particular and every religion (perhaps to a lesser extent) sees abortion rights as giving a right to genocide against the most defenseless of human beings. I was thinking this morning how stuff like that God starts off life in the womb and accusations of murder against women and their doctors who assert their woman's right to her own body makes many feel there is nothing going on around them but genocide enabling and genocide leads to de-sensitisation of real genocide. Talk from religionists about atheism as opening to the door to genocide and implementing it is simply hate speech.

The Bible God commands the destruction of God's people who start to follow other gods. The New Testament describes Hell as the second death or death and Jesus vowed to send people to there for disagreeing with him and disobeying him.

Atheists should not be so insecure that they would need to resort to mass murder to see the end of religion.

Hitler and Stalin are put forward as examples of the evil that can take place if an atheist rises to power. It is not admitted however that Hitler was devout in his own way to the end and that both he and Stalin recognised religious freedom and secular values but did not live up to them.

People often go to war not for material benefits for themselves or any benefits but to satisfy their sense of loyalty to the leader of the country. Religion is a personality cult. Christianity is based on Jesus and Islam on Mohammed and so on. Atheists don't carry on like that so atheism should lead to less war than religion.

Pseudo-religion is an argument for religion being dangerous

Steven Pinker does not like the green movement: "Starting in the 1970s, the mainstream environmental movement latched onto a quasi-religious ideology, greenism, which can be found in the manifestoes of activists as diverse as Al Gore, the Unabomber, and Pope Francis... Greenism is laced with misanthropy, including an indifference to starvation, an indulgence in ghoulish fantasies of a depopulated planet, and Nazi-like comparisons of human beings to vermin...".

If religion harms, then something that is inspired by religion or aspires to be will be harmful too. An atheist system can in fact be a religion in its own way.

Intolerance of religion

Each religion tends to intolerance of other religions but forbids intolerance of itself.

Atheism looks for sincerity and helps people to achieve it. The wise atheist does not believe that any God is going to help people believe in the truth. The atheist does not believe that the notion that God is inspiring your beliefs entitles you to be dogmatic and intolerant. Tolerance means you allow people to do what you disapprove of and criticise. It does not mean you must not criticise what they do. In fact if you didn't express your disapproval it wouldn't be tolerance. Religion tries to

stop people criticising it. No liar or fraud likes to be looked at by the sceptic. Tolerance is a paradox. We tolerate in others what we find intolerable. That can easily turn into passive aggression.

Any regime, even one that claims to be godless, can be totalitarian. But if a regime tells people that they are stupid so they need grace from God to see the truth and the truth is that the regime is right then that regime is totalitarian in the fullest sense of the word. Atheist systems even if they are totalitarian cannot put people down or deceive them to that extent. Human systems are only human and not so sacred that they cannot be critically examined. Religious faith and faith in God makes for worse totalitarianism than unbelief ever could.

The individual

The normal person will feel tremendous compassion for the individual. And more so when that individual is the victim of random evil such as disease or poverty. These things can happen to anybody. The compassion will be made stronger if the person believes the individual will lose everything at death. Such feelings should urge the atheist to work for a better world.

Religion stunts them by making out that God has a use for evil and disease. Jesus told the poor to make their poverty worse by giving away their cloak to anybody that steals their coat.

Most religious believers don't show much of an inclination to go and help the poor for they feel that God will make it up to the poor in an afterlife. They like to feel that their prayers are helping the poor despite appearances to the contrary. They tell themselves that God's ways are mysterious and hidden.

The atheist who denies the reality of the supernatural miracle of free will will be able to look upon the most vile of actions without hating the perpetrator. This is the fullest form of atheism for it says people are programmed and not free. All other forms of atheism fall short. Pure atheism should not lead to trouble but to peace. It rejects all doctrines that can be used as an excuse for persecuting people while religion reveres such doctrines.

If violence occurs in an atheist community or nation the religious come up with a post hoc explanation that atheism is to blame. Such a message can inspire some atheists to really be violent but the religious lies are to blame. Just because atheists came before the violence and ruled that does not make them automatically under suspicion or to be blamed. If a religion is powerful in a country and the country becomes very good that does not justify any post hoc notions that the religion has the power to improve and lift people.

We conclude that the accusations against atheists conducting genocide are flawed and bigoted. We have to react strongly against that - it is merely self-defence.