

Dawkins - The Four Big Ones

Richard Dawkins makes these basic charges against religion:

1 DARWINISM EXPLAINS WHERE WE CAME FROM AND WHY WE ARE WHAT WE ARE AND IT MAKES THE GOD THEORY REDUNDANT.

The correct view is that the God theory is redundant regardless of whether or not Darwinism is correct.

Dawkins insists that before Darwin and the Theory of Evolution the atheist was not intellectually fulfilled. The atheist argued, "I know or strongly believe that there is no God. I cannot explain why all things seem to have been designed. I hope somebody can come up with an adequate explanation for that one day." But this overlooks the fact that if you have your strong evidences against the existence of God then you don't have to worry about anything that seems to conflict with that evidence. You can be intellectually satisfied.

The charge does not claim that Darwinism disproves the existence of God. It claims that Darwinism makes the God theory unnecessary.

Things make themselves. This agrees both with the notion that there is a God and the notion that there is not.

God sets things up to make themselves. This repudiates atheism.

Which one is scientific? It is the first. It just does not comment on anything other than that things make themselves. The second brings in God so its unscientific. It is going beyond the evidence.

Religion likes to say that science is based on the belief that nature follows laws. Religion says the laws came from God. It argues that science then presupposes that there was a lawmaker so when it claims that there may be no God it shows that it is in denial. But God just is and didn't make the law that he could make laws. So in reality both believers and atheists believe that laws can exist without a lawmaker. And say there is only a law that light will permeate the universe. If you need a lawmaker to explain that then you only need one who makes that law. It does not follow that he can make laws that produce people or the universe. The believers get ahead of themselves.

And religion lies about what science means by laws of nature. They are not laws in the sense that a lawmaker makes laws. They really mean regularity. They describe what we see. For example, babies don't grow from lupin seeds. The laws are about what we perceive and not about God or a lawmaker.

The God Delusion by Dawkin's states that evolution is not all about chance. Dawkins says that life started off by chance. Christians call this a contradiction. It is not. If a basic calculator was formed by chance in such a way that it could progress, its origin was chance but its progress is not down to chance. The origin of the progress being down to chance does not mean that the progress itself is directed by randomness. Something that functions like it was planned can begin by chance.

Christians sometimes say that DNA was made and left to program itself. So they admit that even if God started this off, evolution is meant to act on its own.

Christians say that Dawkins saying that life generated spontaneously contradicts the scientific law of biogenesis that claims that life can only come from life. If this is a problem, the Christian problem is far worse. It says life came from God but God's life is different from life as we understand it. Calling it life at all may be meaningless. The law is about biological life and God is not a biological entity.

Richard Dawkins wrote that our genes act like entities that have no purpose. It is by chance that they function in a way that ensures survival. They are about survival not morality or love or anything good. If that is true then there is no good God for a good God would make us for love. For most believers God and morality are somehow one and the same thing meaning that if we are not made to be moral then we are not made for God and thus there is no God.

Richard Dawkins says that genes do get organisms to behave in unselfish ways so that the genes can ensure they will survive at the expense of other beings. If that is so, then unselfish people are just tools in a scheme where the forces of selfishness are taking advantage of them.

Some say that survival would be a form of morality albeit a very poor one. A God who makes you to survive is not much of a God. If God is protecting you there is no such thing as surviving for cannot lose control enough for you to manage to survive.

Moralists disguise their morality as love but it really is about survival. This is the reason why the more people devote themselves to love the more the signs appear that this devotion is not as deep as it looks. The self-proclaimed disciples of love are keen to persecute because it is about survival and survival is about harming the enemy.

2 RELIGION TAKES REFUGE IN FAITH AND MYSTICISM INSTEAD OF PROOFS AND EVIDENCES FOR ITS CLAIMS.

Take the resurrection of Jesus. Christianity does not try to show that Jesus was alive after his crucifixion. Rather it tries to show he was resurrected. In other words, bend the evidence to suit the theory. If it were fair it would not say, "The resurrection of Jesus is historical fact." Rather it would say, "The historical evidence is that Jesus was alive after the time we are told he died on the cross." That does not necessarily indicate that he rose from the dead.

There is reason to think that the Prophet Muhammad was alive after he supposedly died and nobody says that we should infer a resurrection.

If an effect can be its own cause, then it follows that the notion of God being the cause of the universe could be wrong. Religion says with all the philosophers that no effect is its own cause. It denies that God is the cause of his own existence. It says he is just there. So he is a brute fact.

Religion pretends that mystical events are their own evidence. That though it seems to be respectful of evidence actually is not. Each mystic has different experiences from the next. You have one Catholic visionary saying the Virgin Mary spoke of the rapture when the Church would ascend to Heaven before Armageddon. Then you have another saying Mary agrees with the Church that the rapture is a Protestant error.

Dawkin's takes religious faith as blind trust. It is faith in the absence of evidence. It is also faith when there is evidence and that evidence is not used or cared about. The religious answer is that faith and belief are plausible. Dawkin's does not have a problem with acts of faith. It is faith that disregards evidences and proofs and facts that oppose it that is the problem. That is what he means by blind trust. Sometimes you need faith but you must not let it blind you.

The problem Dawkin's has with God is that though you cannot totally prove he does exist, none of the reasons for believing are really valid or sensible. We do not have to disprove God to not believe. You don't need to disprove fairies to hold that they do not exist. Though absence of evidence is not evidence of absence, it is evidence that the absence is believable and rational.

3 THE SCIENTIFIC VIEW OF REALITY IS AWE-INSPIRING AND BEAUTIFUL AND THE RELIGIOUS VIEW IS NOT.

Christianity tells us about the beauty of God. But they say that God is a being without parts and emotions in himself. They say God can take the form of a beautiful light and appear to us and make himself visible. That is a lie. God cannot show himself for though he is not nothing he is like nothing. The light could not show God any more than a mask can show what the wearer looks like or is. Its a prop.

The awe experienced by the religious person and the atheist have the same sensual causes. The only difference is that one pretends that she is experiencing something of God and the other does not. The truly religious view is abstract and boring and unappealing. We cannot relate to something so different from the material joys and entities that inspire us.

4 RELIGION HAS THE IRRESISTIBLE TENDENCY TO DO HARM.

If you live by the view that everything is natural and even the strangest reports have mundane explanations even if we don't know what they are you will do no harm. You will never sow the desire in another to believe in the supernatural or magic or paranormal. If all were like you there would be nobody being terrorised by their own imagination to think that they are seeing ghosts. There would be nobody putting more faith in a faith healer than in the doctor. People have been killed during exorcisms etc. If unbelief saves one life or makes one person that little bit better off then its worth it. Mere belief in the supernatural paves the way to evil. Thus it is an evil belief because it is unnecessary. Belief in God and in Heaven never console people. People make their own positive responses. If you can make yourself happy by thinking of Heaven then you have made this happiness not belief in Heaven. If you can make the crutch of supernatural belief you can make it of natural belief.

The Roman Catholic Church enjoyed the power that Franco's regime gave it in Spain so much that it condoned the evil he did. It became part of the evil machine. The Vatican acquiesced to this too. No bishop was even slightly disciplined for the collaboration with evil and cruelty.

Christianity boasts that it produces agape - when you love another to achieve their well-being irrespective of what you will get out of it. You are doing it for them and not because it makes you happy to see them happy. Christianity complains that Dawkins will state that such love contradicts survival of the most adaptable and that life is a struggle for existence that involves destroying what gets in your way. But in fact, you are trying to create love for if it does not exist then it cannot benefit you or anybody else. Doing good for me seems less good than doing it for me and others. After all I would not be here if nothing cared about me.

Those who agree with these charges often accuse the theologians of having a dishonest agenda and of being able to do anything in order to fool their followers. The theologians accuse these critics of doing that very thing.

Not one of the four points is as popular as religion is.

Not one of them can be used to get money off the poor and the gullible.

Not one of them can give people the buzz from getting others to believe the stupid things they say. Or the buzz that comes from seeing their distortions and lies and inanities validated by those people congregating in their honour.

Religion is good at being a crutch. Not one of the four charges need form a crutch.

Which side then should be under suspicion of being ideologically driven to the point of being dishonest and at least partly evil?