

## OPPOSITES ATTACKED

### Are there two rival Gods?

#### *Theology of Dualism*

In ancient times religionists were puzzled about how a good God could permit evil to be. They came up with a simple solution or at least they thought it was a solution. They said there was an all-good God but whose power to do good was limited by another God, a bad one. By bad, a God who likes to make people sin, or torture them or be vengeful to them or all three is meant. These two Gods have to be equal for one could bind the other and take over everything if one was stronger. They have to compromise all the time and neither can act without the consent of the other. This doctrine is known as Cosmological Dualism.

To many today it appears that suffering can be explained by the notion that Dualism is true. The theory implies that we live after death for some people have lots of happiness on earth while others do not.

Would good God accept some souls to care for non-stop forever and let bad God have the rest to torment non-stop forever? Maybe for the result is as much good as evil. But it is more probable that instead of each taking his share in this way that each will let the other treat all of them as he pleases at times so that all of us will have pleasure and then sorrow and then pleasure and sorrow again and so on for all eternity. It is likely because we would not be here on earth living in a mixture of good and evil which would not be if each of the Gods wanted half of us all to himself.

Bad God would be doing the happy people a favour if he let Good God have them so that they will never ever suffer. He'd rather afflict them some of the time. Against this it might be said that he has to allow this to hurt the rest, the other half, all the time. But he would be more interested in spoiling virtue and defiling good things for he hates the Good God than in cruelty. Good God would be more interested in the redemption of the wicked from evil than in having people who have never strayed from him.

The Gods are not infinite. You cannot have infinite good power and infinite evil power for infinite power means having all possible power. Infinite power cannot be all evil and all good.

Both Gods have to be equally powerful for otherwise the strongest would have triumphed over the other. We know what life would be like if one of them were supreme. Neither can act without the other's consent. They must compromise. Each one wants to do its own thing to us for half of our existence. And that is why they are forced to let each other act.

Dualism does not imply reincarnation. The soul could be a kind of body that is not sensed until death and which enables life, and pain and happiness to continue.

In the early Church, some heretics believed that the body and the world and all that is material is evil and the handiwork of an evil God. The Good God is the maker of spiritual things, spirit is what has no parts. They believed that matter was evil for it stank of decay and death and forced the mind to forget about the things of the good God. Matter need not be evil but it is evil the way it is. But if we are made for God alone if he exists as Augustine and Jesus and reason say then we don't need bodies and having them would tell us that God does stupid things for a soul would do.

Many of the heretics argued that a person who was attached to material things would be reincarnated and come back to this world after they die. Until a person becomes totally in line with the good God and contemplates and wills to be with him alone they will be reincarnated. That means that the person must have no dependence on matter at all. For some this meant starving to death. For others it meant a body eating and drinking and taking care of itself while the soul or mind was preoccupied with God and not even knowing what it was doing.

The fastest way to prove that the theory is untrue is that there is no free will and that none of the arguments for a good God work. If we had no free will and these Gods existed life would be different for it would not seem as if we were not puppets.

#### *The Parent and the Tormentor*

Could there be a benevolent God and a cruel one? No.

We all spend much of every day in a state in which we are a bit happy and a bit sad at the same time. If there were two Gods we would be this way all the time. There would be no ecstatic joy or severe sorrow. But some might suppose that this way and the way things are still add up to the same amount of suffering in the end so it does not matter. But the first way is the simplest. If Good God did not do what was the easiest he would be evil for then he would be irrational. Some say, "We would rather be somewhere between happiness and sadness all the time than to get all the suffering we are due in full force.

Bad God would be doing us a favour if he accepted this arrangement.” But it makes no difference. It would be stupid to prefer one to the other. At times, we suffer so that we will be glad later.

If we do not have free will then we would all be suffering one minute and happy the next or half and half all the time.

Good God will have nobody to love so it seems impossible to see how he could really be good. But love is in the intent and you can have it if there is nobody else for you would love them if there were. If he loves evil God then he is desiring to reward him for his evil. Maybe he just wishes would repent and be happy but mercy is evil. He cannot love the evil God. Some would say that he cannot know his love is real when he cannot use it but you know you would eat a T-bone steak even if you have not got one. Good God is evil if he claims to be love and he does. Opening your eyes shows that there are not two evil Gods. The theory is incoherent. Even if he has to love something he does not have to love that evil God. An atheist father can love a dead child that he believes does not exist anymore.

If there is a bad God and a good one then we do not exist so that we will be perfect but so that we will flit back and forth between good and evil forever and ever. Good God had no purpose for evil. There is no point in hurting a person to make them temporarily good. We would expect Bad God to do lots of sinful miracles – like making you think you are fornicating or raping – and Good God to do lots of holy ones to attract us to holiness. If Good God is more interested in making us good than in us being happy the theory gets more absurd. It has God working to make us good and letting the Devil desecrate that good. Better to have no people to be good than to have good set up to be mocked.

The theory of two opposing Gods is implausible for it is too much of a coincidence that both have the same strength of power.

Watch out for the anti-dualist arguments, arguments against the notion of their being a bad God and a Good God, that do not succeed.

Some say, “It is better not to make people at all when they are going to suffer half the time. It would not be right for there is no need to make them. Good is doing the least evil and demands doing what is half good and half evil when one has one’s back to the wall. Goodie is as bad as baddie when he agreed to create. So the notion of two Gods, one good and one malign, is nonsense.” Making people under such circumstances is both good and evil or neutral if you prefer. Therefore, it is wrong to condemn it. But if it is neutral then the Good God cannot do good and the evil one cannot do evil but all they do is will good and evil and why create at all if that is all the far they can get? Gods are more likely to do nothing when something is no use. This refutes whatever kind of good and bad God you can imagine.

Against the two Gods theory, some point to the fact that some babies suffer and others do not. They think that if good God were really good he would protect all babies and let baddie go for the wicked. But when there is no free will it makes no difference for all are without guilt. If babies were spared so would good people be. Bad God would not want such a state of affairs, if we have free will, because it would deter sinners from sin.

Incidentally, if we have no free will then the Gods can’t make free beings and probably have no free will themselves. It is too much of a coincidence then that one is good and the other evil.

Some follow C S Lewis’s argument from The Problem of Pain that Bad God has some good qualities. He has patience, persistence and intelligence which he would not have unless he had once been a good God. Both Gods should not have used their power to prevent either of them from falling away for the sake of the beings they would create. That time was the time for creating all the beings they could possibly create, not when one of them had abandoned goodness. Neither God was ever good or sincere. We see there is a contradiction in the notion of two Gods. If the Gods are outside time then they cannot change. Then it is absurd to speak of one of them being evil because he couldn’t have abandoned his original righteousness. But it is possible to imagine a God being started off or created perverse or always having been evil. The evil is in the God’s will and to in his components. He can’t be evil without having the good of intelligence and patience to will and do evil. The argument seeks to twist the idea of an evil God into something ludicrous in order to dispose of it.

We reject the doctrine of a pair of Gods, one caring and his rival brutal. Some say that it is hypocrisy to call one God good and the other evil when one says hand me the medicine and the other says hand be the poison. But the theory says they have no choice so the objection is invalid.

If we are free then the supreme degradation is the removal of free will for it prevents us from doing good. Some say that evil God would do the worst thing to us or to half of us which is removing the freedom. But then that would stop us doing evil too. He could do the evil we do himself but it is preferable for him to get a person to sin than to hurt that person. But then it makes no difference for he still gets half the power over lives with which to do evil – the amount is going to be the same whatever he does. Sin is an insult against the good God and is infinite evil because it is spitting upon the everlasting love he has for you so it is worse than suffering. He would be sinning in hurting a person and if the person sins instead of

being hurt and Bad God sins by tempting her or him that means two sins instead of one. He would want us to sin and enjoy it so that we will do it again. There is no reason for good God to allow suffering so the existence of suffering disproves the one holy and one sinful God notion. Good God would not be so mysterious like the infinite God of Christian dogma so there would be no mystery in his sending suffering upon us especially when it is likely to make us curse him. Bad God has no need for suffering either.

### *Varieties of Dualism*

We have tried the idea that there are two Gods, one good and the other malign and found it hopeless. There are, however, other forms of dualism.

The second century heretic, Marcion, taught that there were two Gods. One was pure love and kindness while the other one was pure and rigid justice. The God of love was revealed through Jesus who was a phantom and opposes the strict Old Testament God of justice who gave out punishment instead of love.

The fact that there is no free will proves that neither of these Gods exist. For instance, both Gods would do nothing but good to us when we don't deserve to suffer. We suffer so they are fictitious.

These Gods have to compromise too. Both just have different understandings of good and neither would want innocent babies to suffer. Babies suffer so they don't exist.

The Gods are the most intelligent beings. But if they were really smart they would talk to one another to see who is right. If the God who is wrong cannot see that he is wrong then he is evil not stupid. We do not know which God is the one who is good when they do not know themselves so it is sheer bigoted taking of sides to grant allegiance to one of them and not the other. The result: we have to be loving to some monsters and strict justice to others for all we can do is try to please both Gods. They cannot blame us for acting so. The result is chaos for people cannot be expected to agree on when strict justice should be done. The theory will only torture the mind of the person who accepts it.

Marcion said that the God of love was not known to the just God. But that does not get the God of justice off the hook. He should still know which is best, love or fairness. And the God of love is evil when he won't try to change the other God.

He knows now for we have just pointed that out to him.

If we have free will there is another absurdity. If sin is infinitely evil then everybody should suffer all the time. Reason says that we can take infinite torture all in one go but when neither God is infinite this cannot be done. And when God inflicts severe punishment it proves that he is not interested in letting us pay in the form of tiny smarts of pain every million years for all eternity. He considers it best to hurt us all the time forever. But it is not best. It is an injustice to choose the worst kind of justice for all deserve what is best. The criminal deserves the best punishment. Marcion's notion of a just but not evil God is a fallacy.

When he cannot give us all we deserve because of the other God and the other is half tied down as well then why does the evil one not hurt as much as possible and the other make us as ecstatic as possible for the limit level of suffering and pain could be stronger than it is? It would be when good and evil merit infinite good and evil respectively. Even if there is one God of evil and another of good the limit would be beyond all belief.

When we think that God is rewarding us for our sins by not punishing us then he would act to punish us. He cannot delay for any mysterious purpose for he is not interested in making us better people but in treating us according to our works. Marcion's God is ruining his own good name.

Perhaps it is a God of goodness and a God who does wrong against those who do wrong - revenge? The latter could harm a baby for revenge. He would not allow us to disapprove of his actions for he says revenge is right but we cannot approve of the other God's opposing view at the same time. We will be punished for taking the Good God's side.

The Gods are not trying to make us good for they could do more to win us over to goodness. They could make us know what right and wrong are which many do not.

We will have suffering one minute and happiness the next forever and ever.

One vengeful God would do for he is good to the good. Two Gods are unnecessary.

Some Satanic groups argue that there are two Gods, Satan and Yahweh. Satan, the God of evil, they say, will triumph over his adversary some day. Thus they argue that it is wisest to be on the Bad God's side.

But why will Satan win the battle?

If it is because he is stronger then he should have won long ago. He has not won which is easily enough seen from looking around us.

If it is because he is smarter and will finally outwit the other God then we have another piece of nonsense. He could have managed to do that ages ago.

It is silly to say that each God magically gets his power from the support of the people who are for him and that Satan will rule some day because most will serve him. One of them must have the majority now. The doctrine presupposes the superstition of free will because no God would agree to a set-up in which his defeat is sealed which he would know if determinism were true.

Would the Gods really arrange to make a world and then decree that the God who has the most support will overcome the other God? It would be a dangerous risk for either God to take. They could go on as they are as equals. And bad God would have the power to go against the agreement. So, they would have to forget about taking over the cosmos.

It is a blunder to hold that the God of Goodness will be the conqueror. Yet this was the doctrine of the Zoroastrians of long ago, the largest religion in the world at the time of Christ until it was supplanted by his even sillier one.

And there are still people foolish enough to accept cosmological dualism and the theory logically implies that it doesn't matter if you fight evil or not for it is never going to be any better anyway.

### *Conclusion*

The idea of one God, two Gods or three fails to solve any of the logical problems that comes with the hope that there is a higher being or beings that we can count on.

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