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WHY RELIGION LOVES THE INTELLIGENT DESIGN DOCTRINE

Contrary to the notion that you cannot tell there is a God from the universe and how it is laid out and that God and science are different and separate, religion always implicitly and often explicitly preaches intelligent design. It is clearly a scientific theory.

THE IMPORTANCE OF INTELLIGENT DESIGN

Intelligent design is a consoling doctrine for it is usually taken to imply that there are powers over nature that can be used for good. The spiritual appeal of the design doctrine stems from the religious belief that God is in control of nature and all things and thus is well able to look after us and even when it seems otherwise IS looking after us. If the universe has no design or no sign of design but looks organised by luck then it does not help give you confidence in God. Thus it ruins religion's doctrine that faith in God gives meaning to life. A doctrine of meaning for life has to respect and as far as possible fill our need and right to reason and for evidence. It is incomplete and is going to form a crutch that is too fragile if that is lacking.

Islam and Christianity and Judaism argue that the universe is designed and that God is the designer. They take advantage of the fact that this rings true to the lazy person. The lazy person forgets that even if all things are designed it does not follow that a mind or God was behind it. I feel a lot of it is down to the fact that people do not realise that the universe was chaotic when it began and over an unimaginable period of time it began to resemble something like what we have now. Believers in intelligent design seem to think that a fully fledged universe appeared at the big bang! No wonder they feel the need to believe in intelligent design. They forget that most of the universe even now is chaotic and unorganised.

St Paul, was an apostle of Jesus. He wrote much of the New Testament. God supposedly also wrote them according to Christian dogma. So Paul/God wrote that pagan believers who don't believe in God, have no excuse for the design of the cosmos shows he must exist (Romans 1:20). Paul was speaking to non-philosophers here so he takes it for granted the existence of the cosmos and its seeming design is clear and simple proof for ordinary people. Most philosophers and scientists would dispute his assumptions. But Paul is commanding that we ignore them and pretend it is all simple. Everybody in those days thought that the earth was the only planet or the centre of the universe which made the design argument look so plausible but we know better. Paul would have had these silly unscientific ideas in mind so by implication his scripture commands us to go back to them!

The conversion to theism tool that religion has the most success with is the design argument. It is terrible but it would not be so bad if it said that all things MAY have been designed by an immensely powerful intelligence but it is wrong for it puts MUST where may is. It should not identify this intelligence as God. The design argument errs in telling us that the designer must be the same being as the necessary being which is false for there is no need for a God to be the necessary being.

THE DESIGN ARGUMENT AND SIN

Religion says that sin not earthquakes and plagues is the greatest evil. You can sin in your will without giving any hint to anybody else that you are doing it. The worst sins are what you would do and are retained in the heart. They happen a great deal more than physical or acted out sins. God supposedly uses these evils to do a greater good. If God designed all things then he then he set it up to produce as much good as possible. But we must be sceptical about this great good because the huge majority of evils are secrets in the human heart. How then anybody who believes in religion can be so sure that good is greater than evil overall is beyond me. When you add the natural disasters that are not caused by us to the equation the picture gets more sinister and frightening. The design argument implies that there is more good than evil and this is thanks to God. It is only guessing that. The design argument is itself a refutation of divine love for it is only meant for people who want selfish pipe-dreams. They have to close their minds to the secret evil intentions that are the dominant form of evil for them. The design argument not an argument – its just a guess. To call it an argument is to lie and it insults people who have a lot of pain in their lives. Belief in a dangerous God is evil.