

## A REBUTTAL TO ATHEISM WHICH SEEMS TO CONVERT PEOPLE TO ATHEISM!

What I Believe is written by Anthony Kenny. Anthony Kenny is one of the leading philosophers of the post-war years. As he recounts in this book, he abandoned the Roman Catholic priesthood to set out on an intellectual journey which led him to become a professional academic and philosopher of distinction. Kenny responds to the request to write personally and honestly about his own struggles with belief with attempts to argue for the existence of God and to show how he has developed a position which is that neither of the theist nor the atheist.

What I Believe says

God is omniscient. He knows the future and what we will do. But if we are really free, God cannot know what we will do. PAGE 8

If God is outside time he cannot foresee our actions for past, present and future are all the one for him. It is like a present moment with the past and the future present in it and all is happening at the one time. That means my future actions are present to him already and not future to him and so I cannot avoid doing them. If God can see that I sin tomorrow that means I cannot avoid sinning and so I don't have free will. The thought that God is timeless is silly for it has Boethius being imprisoned being simultaneous with the sack of Troy. Eternity doesn't have parts so we cannot say that time and eternity both happen. That would require eternity to have a limit and also be treating time like a part of eternity that was different and in which change really happened PAGE 48, 49

When actions are future there is no necessity for them to happen but suggesting God knows what we will do contradicts that so God knowing what we will do in the future contradicts our free will PAGE 50

My Comments

If God is not timeless then it is impossible for God to know the future without controlling what we do and controlling everything. Then there is no free will. Then God is to blame for all the wrong we do.

If God is timeless then it is only an illusion when I think I deliberate about things and make a decision. To deliberate it would really need to happen before the decision but timelessness has time down as an illusion and the deliberation and the deciding all happening at once. Free will is about thinking your choice through and going for it or not going for it. It requires time.

God and free will are incompatible.

Religionists say that God foresees what we will freely do. But they cannot prove that this is possible given the nature of time and eternity. They endanger belief in free will with their God idea until they prove the two are compatible. They cannot prove a thing. Therefore what they are saying makes no sense.

They don't know what way free will works or how to make it. They don't know how God's knowledge works or how to make it. They therefore cannot rule out that both are so linked that genuine free will isn't possible.

Let me explain. It might be impossible for God in some way we don't understand for him to be aware of anything even the future without largely controlling it or totally controlling it. I can look at something without the looking affecting it. But God is totally different from me. An X-Ray Machine cannot look at me without sending radiation into me that affects me. Religion says that God's powers and attributes are all one with him because in spirit there is no division and he is spirit. His knowledge is the same as his power to control things. This may prove that he cannot foresee what we will do without making us do it. If it doesn't, it makes it the most likely scenario.

Jack the Ripper mutilated Catherine Eddowes in a very distinctive way. He left cuts below her eyes that looked like incomplete triangles. Suppose I know all this. Suppose an alien appears to me and wipes my memory and sends me back in a time machine to the Ripper's killing field in 1888 and I become the Ripper. I kill all those women. The exact same thing happens as I read about in the books before I went back in time. How could what I knew before I went back in time coincide and be an exact match for what happened to Eddowes when my memory is wiped and the alien didn't force me to copy the books? How could I copy the books when the books are about what I did? Something forced me to carry out the murders according to the books. It must have been God or something. God knowing the future means that God must control the future and program our decisions. We do not have free will if there is a God. And if there is a God he must be evil or not

all-good for we cannot blame ourselves but him for evil and suffering.

You may object that God seeing the past doesn't mean that God controlled the past. The past has happened. The future hasn't. that is where the difference is. The question is how something that doesn't have to happen could be foreseen by God which implies it has to happen after all.

Religion says it is wrong to think that because God knows what you will do tomorrow that he is predestining or predetermining you to do it. Islam is an exception. It treats belief in God like belief in fate. The result is they are not afraid of waging war when they feel like it for they think God predestined them to do it. Nor are they afraid to stone adulteresses to death. If belief in God justifies this, then the belief is wholly evil. If it doesn't justify then when such intelligent men as Kenny say it does, clearly nobody can be blamed for thinking as the Muslims do. Belief in God is dangerous.

And at any rate, there is no way to prove the Muslims wrong. The belief is dangerous. It allows a person to agree with the Muslims on the matter of fate. And there is reason to believe the Muslims would be right if there is a God.

Nobody thought that when Muhammad started his religion that it would become so powerful. Nobody thought that Christianity would take off and morph into Roman Catholicism the bloodiest religion ever. The point is, don't take chances. Oppose the God belief and destroy faith in God today.

What I Believe says

Faith in God and the claims of divine revelation is a vice unless belief in God can be shown to be reasonable and the historical claims of faith can be verified as much as any anything else in history. One cannot take God's word for it that he exists and so one needs evidence PAGE 9, 59

My Comments

If you take God's word for it that he exists then why not take somebody else's word for it that they are a prophet of God and they want you to kill people for God? Which God can you take the word for? God is serious business for God claims to be the all-good king of all and the most valuable. Your life is not as important as he is.

Belief in the resurrection of Jesus Christ is unreasonable because the gospels cannot prove the resurrection for they only put forward an interpretation of events. Christianity should believe in the resurrection not in an interpretation which is a different thing altogether. Jesus didn't look the same when he appeared so it seems likely that the witnesses could have had some kind of weird experience that they interpreted as visions of Jesus. There is evidence that the visions of Fatima in 1917 were similar to visions involving aliens and UFOs and over time the Catholic element took over and they got a Catholic flavour and used for Catholic propaganda.

Simon Weil stated that if the bulb lights up the room, you do not look at its brightness to work out how powerful it is but you simply look at the objects it lights up to work that out. She said that Christian faith and faith in God are reasonable in the sense that they make sense of what we observe and experience. This is really saying that having a theory that seems to account for the kind of beings we are and the kind of universe we have and our existence and its existence is reasonable. That view is correct. But it does not follow that the Christian faith and faith in God are the best theories or that they are good theories or even coherent theories. The biggest problem is that they are actually incoherent. Take for example how Christians teach, "The reason Jesus' tomb was empty was because he rose from the dead. The empty tomb is evidence that he rose for nobody had reason to steal the body". But we cannot assume nobody had a reason. And the gospels do not say that when the tomb was opened that the body had already gone. In fact they suggest the tomb opened and there was nobody about until the women came and found the body missing. The body could have been taken after the tomb was opened. If we can come up with a faith theory to make sense of what we observe and experience then surely the theory should be atheistic? We cannot observe and experience God creating. And if we think we experience God, it is only because we have put that interpretation on the experience. That is not experiencing God but experiencing the perceptions you have made of God.

What I Believe says

The strongest argument against the existence of God is the difficulty of conceiving a mind that doesn't have a body PAGE 9

My Comments

Believers assume that God is a mind without a body but they cannot prove this is possible for they neither understand mind or body. We cannot understand the least atom. If I think there is such a thing as a maths book that has no dimensions then I cannot prove I am talking sense. Therefore I cannot be talking sense though the words might at first glance seem to mean

something. Same with God.

What I Believe says

Atheism says that whatever definition of God you use it is untrue PAGE 21

My Comments

Atheism is the rejection of an infinite and all-powerful and all-good God. Anything else no matter how powerful it is, cannot be totally supreme and cannot be strictly speaking divine. Atheists can believe an angelic type being that is virtually omnipotent but isn't literally omnipotent runs the universe but they will have to differ with anybody who says that being is God.

What I Believe says

Atheists try to put the burden of proof for God on the theists and the theists try to put the burden of proof against God on the atheists. They treat their position as a default. The true default position is agnosticism. It admits one doesn't know if there is a God or not. It is the default position because it is confessing that one doesn't know if there is a God. But if you claim to know you must substantiate that knowledge. PAGE 21

My Comments

Kenny has argued that God in any meaningful sense is nonsense. So his agnosticism is not sitting on the fence with God and atheism. It is sitting on the fence with a magical being and atheism. That is a totally different agnosticism from what we usually mean.

If I say the tooth fairy doesn't exist I don't have to prove it. The burden of proof is on the person who says it does exist. I don't have to prove myself right in everything I disbelieve. But I may have to prove myself in everything I do believe. To say that being agnostic on the tooth-fairy is the default position is simply ludicrous. If we are default on all supernatural claims, we become irrational. Less irrational yes than the believer in them but irrational all the same.

To be agnostic on whether the tooth fairy exists or not seems silly. It is not a necessary belief and neither is God. God is not going to put bread on the table for you. You need shelter more than you need God. Clergy want you to need God because they want you to need their ridiculous hocus-pocus and them.

You cannot be 50/50 in relation to God. If you are 50.5% of the opinion that God exists then you are a believer though your faith is extremely weak.

What I Believe says

Evolution is a problem because of the problem of language. It doesn't explain it for how could language originate when there was nobody to teach it PAGE 26

My Comments

This is taken as evidence for the existence of a designer being perhaps a God. But psychics would say psychic ability caused language. Besides even simple life forms have their own version of language though it might be like sign language. Your body uses such language with you. It tells you by a feeling that something is too hot to touch. It isn't using words but it is still communicating. If God could be an answer, then where did God get language from? Nothing taught the first bird to chirp or talk. It just happened.

What I Believe says

The question religionists say God is the answer to, "Why is there something rather than nothing?" makes no sense for it is about the origin of the universe. The proposition, "there is nothing" is incoherent. There is no need to ask if incoherent propositions are false. And that is exactly what the question is asking. It is not the existence of the universe that calls for an explanation. It is its coming into existence. PAGE 28

My Comments

Good.

There are two versions of the question.

One is that the universe must have been started off so it means, “Why is there a universe when there could have been none?”

Two is that the universe doesn't need to exist and that even if it never had a beginning something is creating it right now. So the question then means, “The universe for every moment it exists is being created. If God stopped creating the universe would become nothing again. Why is there a universe now rather than none?”

This view denies that the universe was made aeons ago and left to run for itself. It says that the universe whether it had a beginning or not needs something to prevent it turning into nothing for it doesn't need to exist. So the universe that existed a moment ago is the same universe that exists now. But it is made not by one act of creation. Each moment is a separate act of creation.

One view says that creation happened in the past and the other says that creation is happening separately each moment of time. It is happening now and God is creating all the time.

God could give the universe the power to run without him. He could give it the power to be the reason for its own existence.

If a thing can be the reason for its own existence then there is no need for the God hypothesis at all.

The question would be more accurately put as “How is there something rather than nothing?” The God-botherers cannot explain how God makes things so they have no right to manipulate this question to get believers or convince believers.

Why is there a God rather than no God? That is the question that needs to be asked next. The question of the religionists doesn't get us anywhere. The answer is just a lie which doesn't warm us to the god-botherers.

Suppose the question could be answered only by the God hypothesis. It wouldn't prove the God of the Christians but only an impersonal power that makes things exist. To say it proved God would be going too far even if there were a God. You have to go by evidence and you must not go too far. You must not read too much into evidence. The use of the question as an argument for God among Christians speaks of their deceitfulness.

Another problem is how they say God made the universe from nothing not even himself. They agree that something cannot come from nothing but God does miracles so he is exempt from this rule. In mathematical terms, something coming from nothing is like  $0+0=1$ . Nothing makes sense if that is possible. They assume miracles happen without evidence. They reason, “We guess that miracles happen. Therefore God is the origin of the universe in the miracle of creation. The universe had to have a maker so God exists.” How could that be a proof or evidence for God when they are guessing about miracles?

Why is there an atom in a solar system floating about all by itself rather than none? Clearly there is no need for it. Why it exists is more important than how. If God just made it for the sake of it then maybe he doesn't love us at all and just made us for the sake of it too? Amoebas seem to be in that category too!

Evil is what is unnecessary. For example, sloth is unnecessary rest. Adultery is unnecessary sex because you have a wife or husband. A God who makes without need would be evil. His power is sacred so he cannot use it lightly.

So the atom is a problem. And so is the universe if it is not needed. Believers say it isn't needed.

God would not explain the universe. God is the worst possible explanation.

What I Believe says

Some argue that a necessary being is necessary in all possible worlds so since our world exists god must exist. The idea of possible worlds makes no sense. PAGE 36

My Comments

It isn't necessary. Why not just say we have a world and did a necessary being make it? What do you need the possible worlds for? Besides one can imagine a possible world where there is nothing but evil and suffering and people die and stay dead. Would such a world be evidence for a necessary being like the Christian God? Certainly not!

What I Believe says

If an item exists, it depends on other things to exist or there is something in its own nature makes it exist.

Everything needs a reason to exist, and nothing is the reason for its own existence. Something that is the reason for its existence is the reason for the existence of all things. This something is God.

This argument is to be rejected. It says that a thing is not disposed to make itself exist or not. It does nothing to be existing or non-existing. It is equally disposed to both.

If we hold that a thing is indisposed whether it comes into existence or not that is absurd. It cannot decide whether to exist or not before it exists or doesn't exist.

If we hold that a thing is indisposed as to whether it stays in existence or not that is contrary to our experience. You don't see the mat on the landing suddenly going out of existence.

PAGE 39, 40

My Comments

Excellent.

What I Believe says

The design argument for the existence of God from St Thomas is the most convincing but what it gives you is not God but a Grand Architect of the Universe PAGE 40-41

My Comments

Who designed the designer? It doesn't help to say he is God and God doesn't need a designer. That is assuming the designer has to be God – and the argument makes that assumption unwarranted. The designer isn't too clever when he left us with the raw materials to make nuclear weapons and destroy all life on earth.

Christians tend to agree that Thomas gives only a Grand Architect but say this is a partial understanding of God. This is not necessarily correct for we can stop with the Grand Architect. And we should for it is over-explaining. And the Grand Architect may manipulate us to think he is more than what he is and should be honoured as a proper God.

What I Believe says

Kant said we need to believe in God for the sake of morality. He thought only a designer could have arranged life so that virtue and happiness work together and being virtuous makes you happy in this world if not in the next PAGE 43

My Comments

Kant didn't really argue for a proper God. He should have been clear and said that anything that can keep us alive in the afterlife would do.

God must have made cannabis then so that we could have happiness without virtue! Kant's view makes faith in God a moral act in the sense that you have a moral duty to believe in God and are bad if you don't and should be punished.

What I Believe says

Blaise Pascal admitted that there can be no way that reason proves the existence of God or makes it probable so and said that we have to believe in God to be on the safe side for we will go to Hell forever if we disbelieve and there is a God. Is it not safer to take neither road? God cannot blame us for that. Proof is needed that God will really threaten us with eternal damnation for disbelief or unbelief and besides which God should we believe in? The Catholic God, Islamic God, Jansenist or Calvinist God. PAGE 45

My Comments

True.

THE LAST WORD - I do not believe Kenny is truly agnostic. As agnostic was fashionable when atheism was not he used

the tactic of misusing the agnostic label to promote atheism while hiding his atheism. His logic is quite simple and we must remember that we don't have to be obtuse and mysterious to be philosophers.