In November 2006, several of the world’s leading atheistic evolutionary scientists gathered in La Jolla, California for the first “Beyond Belief” symposium (see Lyons and Butt, 2007), which the scientific journal New Scientist called “an atheist love fest” (Reily, 2007, 196[2629]:7). The conference was held three reasons, religion and God, and specifically whether science should “do away with religion” (Brooks, 2006, 192[2578]:9). New Scientist writer Michael Brooks summarized the overall attitude of the attendees in the following words: “science can talk on religion and win” (p. 10). The participants were ready to roll up their sleeves and “get on with it” (p. 11). They were ready to put science “In Place of God,” as Brooks titled his article. Fast forward one year to 2007—then to the “Beyond Belief I” symposium—where some of the participants apparently approached the idea of a Supernatural Being more cautiously. Even New Scientist, who covered the conference for a second year in a row, chose a drastically different article title the second time around—from “In Place of God” to the more sober, “God’s Place in a Rational World” (see Reily, 196[2629]:7, emp. added). Author Michael Reily gave some insight into the meeting by recording what one attendant, Edward Slingerland of the University of British Columbia (author of In Place of God for the Study of Human Evolution, Cognition and Culture), openly acknowledged.

"Religion is not going away," he announced. Even those of us who fancy ourselves rationalists and scientists, he said, rely on moral values—a set of distinctly unscientific beliefs. Where, for instance, does our conviction that human rights are universal come from? “Humans’ rights to me are as mysterious as the holy trinity... You can’t do a CT scan to show where humans’ rights are, you can’t cut someone open and show us their human rights... It’s not an empirical thing, it’s just something we strongly believe. It’s a purely metaphysical entity” (p. 7, emp. added).

Although some at the conference had the naive belief that “[g]iven time and persistence, science will conquer all of nature’s mysteries” (Reily, p. 7, emp. added), it is encouraging to know that at least one person alluded to one of the greatest proofs for God’s existence—the moral argument.

OBJECTIVE MORALITY

Why do most rational people believe in objective morality? That is, why do people generally think that some actions are “right” and some actions are “wrong,” regardless of people’s subjective opinions? Why do most people believe that it is “evil” or “wicked” (1) for some one to walk into a random house, shoot everyone in it, and steal everything in sight? (2) for a man to beat and rape a kind, innocent woman? (3) for an adult to torture an innocent child simply for the fun of it? (4) for parents to have children for the sole purpose of abusing them sexually every day of their lives? Because, as evolutionist Edward Slingerland noted, humans have metaphysical rights—that are “a reality beyond what is perceptible to the senses” (“Metaphysical,” 2011)—and “rely on moral values.” The fact is, most people, even many atheists, have admitted that real, objective good and evil exist.

Antony Flew

During the last half of the 20th century, Dr. Antony Flew, Professor of Philosophy at the University of Reading in England, was considered one of the world’s most well known atheistic philosophers. From 1955-2000, he lectured and wrote extensively on matters pertaining to atheism. Some of his works include, but in no way are limited to, God and Philosophy (1966), Evolutionary Ethics (1967), Darwinian Evolution (1984), The Presumption of Atheism (1976), and Atheistic Humanism (1993). In September 1976, Dr. Flew debated Dr. Thomas B. Warren, Professor of Philosophy at Ohio University and Christian Apologist at Harding Graduate School of Religion in Memphis, Tennessee. Prior to this four-night debate on the existence of God, Warren, in agreement with the rules of the debate, asked Flew several questions in writing, including the following: “True/False. Is murder in murder in which the basic argument has been layered with quicklime, which would burn the feet of the prisoners, including the children. The Jews were starved, gassed, and experimented on. Hitler slaughtered another three million Poles, Soviets, gypsies, and people with disabilities (see “Holocaust,” 2011 for more information).

So were the Nazis guilty of “real (objective) moral wrong”? According to atheist

The Moral Argument for the Existence of God

Eric Lyons, M. Min.
What do atheists mean when they speak of the “Euthyphro Dilemma” as a means to discredit theism?

A

The so-called “Euthyphro Dilemma” has its genesis in Plato’s dialogue Euthyphro in which Socrates and Euthyphro discuss the nature of piety: “Is the pious loved by the gods because it is pious, or is it pious because it is loved by the gods?” (2008). Over time, philosophers have sharpened the salient point of the dilemma by presenting it in a modified form. The world-renowned late atheist philosopher Antony G.N. Flew worded the argument this way: “Are the things which are good good because God approves of those things, or is it the case that God approves of those things which are good?” (Warren and Flew, 1977, p. 26). By this thorny contention, the atheist hopes to dismiss the notion of God by placing theist in an untenable dilemma.

On the one hand, if an action is right simply because God approves it, then morality would be the product of the arbitrary will of God, which He could just as easily alter. Instead of saying that lying and murder are wrong, He could just as well have said they are right—and that divine intention would make them so. On the other hand, if God approves of an action because it is inherently good, then an objective standard exists outside of God that He merely approves. Such a law would therefore be above and higher than God. By the Euthyphro Dilemma, atheists think they have demonstrated that good is either above or beneath God and thereby prove that God is not God (see Figure 1).

This dilemma is impotent in that it fails to take into account the nature, being, and character of the perfect God of the Bible who is eternal and infinite in all of His attributes. Goodness, like all God’s other attributes, flows from His very being as the Ultimate Good (see Figure 2). God is neither above nor below God (cf. Mark 10:18; 1 John 4:8; Psalm 33:5). God’s attributes and God’s will are inseparable. The alternatives posed by the atheist do not pose a proper dilemma.

Dave Miller

REFERENCES


Q&A
The Existence of GOD

DEBATE

Thursday, September 29, 2011—7:00 p.m.
University of North Alabama (UNA)
Norton Auditorium, Florence, AL

For more information contact: mail@apologeticspress.org (800) 234-8558
www.apologeticspress.org

Kyle Butt is a Christian apologist who graduated from Freed-Hardeman University with a B.A. in Bible and Communication and an M.A. in New Testament Studies. He has authored or co-authored more than 20 books, including Out With Doubt: A Look at the Evidences for Christianity, Behold! The Word of God: Exploring the Evidences for the Inspiration of the Bible, Truth Be Told: Exposing the Myth of Evolution, and The Dinosaur Delusion: Dismantling Evolution’s Most Cherished Icon. For over 10 years he has served as the editor of Discovery magazine, a monthly periodical about Scripture and science for third through sixth grade children. Kyle has worked in the Bible department at Apologetics Press for more than a decade. Apologetics Press is a tax-exempt, non-profit organization dedicated to the defense of New Testament Christianity.

Blair Scott is the Communications Director for American Atheists, Inc. He is a staff writer for American Atheist magazine and manages the NoGod-Blog, the official blog of American Atheists. He runs The Critical Eye Podcast with his co-host Tom Hand. Blair has been an atheist since the seventh grade and was an activist in the United States Navy. Since departing the Navy he has been a civilian activist who has formed two local organizations, three activism groups, and held several key roles in local and national organizations. Blair recently handed over his roles as Alabama State Director and National Affiliate Director for American Atheists to others and passed the torch to new leadership at the North Alabama Freethought Association. Blair lives in Huntsville, Alabama with his wife and twin daughters where he writes a regular column on atheism for the Huntsville Times.

“...always be ready to give a defense to everyone who asks you a reason for the hope that is in you, with meekness and fear.”

1 Peter 3:15
Q: Who or what was Peking Man?

A: If it is true that human beings are the latest product in a long line of evolutionary ancestors that were part human and part ape-like creature, there should be clear and decisive evidence in the fossil record to substantiate it. Billions of fossils should exist that illustrate the evolutionary progression of man from alleged ape-like ancestors. However, as we have conclusively proven elsewhere (cf. Harrurr and Thompson, 2003; Thompson, et al., 2002), such evidence is lacking. As Colin Patterson, the late paleontologist, admitted several years ago, try though they might, with over a century of fossil searching by evolutionists, “there is not one….transitional—man from alleged ape-like ancestors. However, evolutionary biologists on the road to “modern” humans are complex organic machines that die completely with no purposeless existence of a personal God or a future existence with reward and punishment, he cannot find anything to substantiate their claims. In 1941, the fossils mysteriously went missing. Gao Xing, a paleontologist and member of the Working Committee to Search for the Lost Skullcaps of Peking Man, said, “We don’t know where the bones are. They may well have been destroyed. But we have to look” (Melvin, 2005). How ironic it is, that the more evolution is examined, the more its alleged evidence goes mysteriously missing.

Jeff Miller

REFERENCES


Speaking Schedules

Kyle Butt
September 11-14
Hazel, KY
(270) 492-8026

Eric Lyons
September 9-11
Pottstown, PA
(610) 324-9028

Dave Miller
September 4
Norfolk, VA
(757) 262-4290

Jeff Miller
September 11-15
Montgomery, AL
(334) 399-7617
admit that, for example, when the Jews were starved, gassed, and experimented on “like the animals” they reportedly were (cf. Marchant, 2008), the Nazis did nothing inherently wrong. They were wrong morally, and this ultimately caused modern complex organic, meaningless mecha- nisms that chose to follow the orders of the Fuhrer. Or, to apply Dawkins reasoning, how could Hitler be guilty of wrongs against humanity if he was not in any real sense pursuing the survival of the “best” DNA possible? “[I]f it does not matter who or what gets hurt in the process,” Barker admitted. “Nothing is right. But situation ethics is right!” Furthermore, on what basis does Barker think it is “right” to save humanity? His entire argument ultimately contradicts his already contradictory concerns,” Barker went on to admit (and even disturbingly joke) that it would be acceptable to rape two, two thousand, or even two million women, if, it resulted in saving six billion people from hypothetical alien invaders (p. 34). Despite FE. Allen invaders and their potential for evolu- tionary genocide, Barker stated: “Science is the only world that imaginary in the world of atheism. After all, since life supposedly evolved on Earth, according to atheistic evolution- ary theory, there had to have also evolved in one form or another on some other distant planets in the Universe.” Do not miss the point. Dan Barker admitted that rape would be acceptable given certain evolutionary circumstances. One obvious obvious question: when then begins to decide the circumstances that warrant the rape of innocent women? Who is Barker to say that a woman would be wrong to rape a woman for revenge, say, because she crashed into his new car? Or, is Barker to say that it would be wrong to rape a woman for stealing $1,000 from him, etc? The fact is Barker (or any athe- ist) alleges that (1) God does not exist, and (2) therefore, “[n]o inherent moral or ethical laws exist” (Provine, 1988, 2[16]:10, a logical deduction). God, if not exist, then no one can logically be criticized for anything. As Sartre put it: “Everything is indeed permitted if God does not exist” (1989). Rape, child abuse, abortion, murder, pedophilia, etc. can all be condemned as objective evil, if God does not exist. What happens when atheistic evolu- tionists take their godless philosophy to its logical conclusion, at least theo- retically? They unveil the true, hidden nature of atheism. Consider, for example, the comments evolutionary ecologist Eric Pianka made in 2006 in Beaumont, Texas where he was recognized as the Distinguished Texas Scientist of the Year. Accepting Barker’s co-author, III, Chairman of the Environmental Science Section of the Texas Academy of Science, Pianka condemned “the idea that humankind occupies a privileged position in the Universe” and “ham- mered his point home by exclaiming, ‘We’re no better than bacteria!’” (Mims, 2006). Pianka followed up this comment by expressing his concerns “about how human overpopulation is ruining the Earth” (Mims). According to Mims, Prokoffier Pianka said the earth as we know it will not survive without drastic measures, and then, without presenting any data to justify this number, Pianka stated: “Hence, we will be forced to make a feasible solution to saving the Earth is to reduce the population to 10 percent of the present number. His...” Pianka went on to estimate that 90 percent of the world’s popula- tion is airless Ebo (Elba Reuson), because it is both too high lethal and it re- kills in days, instead of years (2006), for more information, see Butt, 2008, 28[5]:10-11.

Although most people (a good 90% any- way) find Pianka’s suggestion appalling, if atheism, is true, and humanity really “evolved from bacteria” (Earth Science, 1989, p. 31) we would be nothing inherently wrong for a man to attempt to murder billions of people, even if he does it for a “good” reason (i.e., because he saved the only planet in the Universe on which we know for sure exist). [NOTE: Again, such a reason is that deemed “good” can only exist if God does exist.

CONCLUSION

The moral argument for the God’s exis- tence exposes atheism as the self- deceitful and life-destroying belief that it is. Atheists must either reject the truthfulness of the moral argument’s first premise (“If God does not exist, then objective moral values do not exist”) and illogically accept the indefensible idea that objective morality somehow arose from rocks and reptiles, or (2) they must reject the argument’s second premise (“Objectivity implies that God exists”). Does Ethics Require God? (Dawkins, 273[5]:85). Should we not then claim that situation ethics is right? Such a claim is a self-defeating statement. “Nothing is right. But situation ethics is right!” Furthermore, on what basis does Barker think it is “right” to save humanity? His entire argument ultimately contradicts his already contradictory concerns,” Barker went on to admit (and even disturbingly joke) that it would be acceptable to rape two, two thousand, or even two million women, if, it resulted in saving six billion people from hypothetical alien invaders (p. 34). Despite FE. Allen invaders and their potential for evolu- tionary genocide, Barker stated: “Science is the only world that imaginary in the world of atheism. After all, since life supposedly evolved on Earth, according to atheistic evolution- ary theory, there had to have also evolved in one form or another on some other distant planets in the Universe.” Do not miss the point. Dan Barker admitted that rape would be acceptable given certain evolutionary circumstances. One obvious obvious question: when then begins to decide the circumstances that warrant the rape of innocent women? Who is Barker to say that a woman would be wrong to rape a woman for revenge, say, because she crashed into his new car? Or, is Barker to say that it would be wrong to rape a woman for stealing $1,000 from him, etc? The fact is Barker (or any athe- ist) alleges that (1) God does not exist, and (2) therefore, “[n]o inherent moral or ethical laws exist” (Provine, 1988, 2[16]:10, a logical deduction). God, if not exist, then no one can logically be criticized for anything. As Sartre put it: “Everything is indeed permitted if God does not exist” (1989). Rape, child abuse, abortion, murder, pedophilia, etc. can all be condemned as objective evil, if God does not exist.
In the minds of some, public debates are not profitable events. They feel that debates are negative and only create wrangling and backbiting. While it is certainly true that debates can devolve into unprofitable displays, when properly conducted, a debate can be an extremely valuable force for the advancement of truth. Jesus certainly utilized public, oral disputation on numerous occasions (e.g., John 8:13-59), as did a host of God’s human representatives. Public debate enables attendees to see two opposing viewpoints contrasted with each other in such a way that the audience can see the strengths or weaknesses of each position so that the truth may be recognized.

We at A.P. do not go out of our way to pick fights; but we are genuinely attempting to take seriously the admonition of Paul to the Philippians, that we are “put here for the defense of the gospel” (1:16). Recall the words of Paul to all Christians:

Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places. Therefore take up the whole armor of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand (Ephesians 6:11-13, ESV).

The “rulers of the darkness of this age” and the “spiritual hosts of wickedness” are rampant in our day. If we love people and do not want to see them consigned to an eternity of unquenchable fire (Mark 9:43), and if we love God and desire to fulfill His expectations of us, we must be willing to act when circumstances are presented to us that necessitate a spiritual response. Hence, on Thursday, September 29, at 7:00 p.m., Kyle Butt will engage atheist Blair Scott in public debate on the campus of the University of North Alabama (UNA) in Florence. Scott is the Director of Communications for the American Atheist organization, having received the American Atheist of the Year award in 2007 and again in 2010. The proposition for the debate is: “God Does Not Exist.” Mr. Scott will affirm that God does not exist, while Kyle will deny that affirmation.

The UNA Norton Auditorium will seat some 1,500 people. Admission is free. We hope you will be able to attend the debate. Here is an excellent opportunity to bring glory to the Creator of the Universe, and in the process, to strengthen the resolve of those who believe in God while urging reconsideration of the issues for those who do not. Please pray for the success of this event and make your plans to be a part of it.

Dave Miller

See the Center Spread for More Details or Visit
http://www.apologeticspress.org/article/3760