

Richard Dawkins - God-Hater

by Wayne Jackson

Richard Dawkins is a “Professor of the Public Understanding of Science” at Oxford University. His main passion is spitting venom towards the God he believes does not exist. This is much like a man composing a vitriolic diatribe against “fairies.” Dawkins’ newest literary fiasco is called *The God Delusion* (Houghton Mifflin, October 2006). A laudatory review by an unnamed author in a recent (September 23rd) issue of *The Economist*, celebrates Dawkins as “an atheist, an evolutionary biologist, and an eloquent communicator about science” who has “finally marshaled a lifetime’s arguments against believing in God.”

To get a feeling for the temperament of the professor, Dawkins depicts the non-existent God as “a misogynistic, homophobic, racist, infanticidal, genocidal, filicidal, pestilential, megalomaniacal, sado-masochistic, capriciously malevolent bully.” This linguistic tantrum hardly suggests a calmly considered, logical series of arguments against the existence of God.

### ***Dawkins on the 9/11 Tragedy***

The reviewer begins by suggesting that several of Dawkins’ recent books (including the current one) are reactions to the 9/11 attacks by Muslim terrorists. Generalizing from the particular to the general, the professor draws the conclusion that since the terrorists “believed they were doing God’s [Allah’s] work and would be justly rewarded in the afterlife,” this must imply that belief in God per se is evil and is responsible for such atrocities.

This is nonsense. Abuse by some religionists does not indict all religious people, or religion generally. It is amazing that most atheists appear to be unable to foresee the consequences of their arguments. Has it never occurred to skeptics that the administrations of Marx, Lenin, and Stalin – atheists all – were responsible for the slaughter of more than 100 million souls who would not yield to communism? Does that suggest that all atheists are murderers? No; but such exterminations cannot be condemned upon the basis of the **philosophy** of atheism.

Atheist Jean Paul Sartre expressed it like this: “Everything is indeed permitted if God does not exist, and man is in consequence forlorn, for he cannot find anything to depend upon either within or outside himself....” Another atheist, Bertrand Russell, wrote, “Outside human desires there is no moral standard.” The 9/11 attacks were antagonistic neither to the ideology of atheism nor to that of fundamentalist Islam; but it was **wholly adverse** to Christianity’s imperative to love one’s enemies (Matthew 5:43ff; Romans 12:17ff).

According to his reviewer, Dawkins thinks that if all religion could be obliterated (his ideal), “any positive aspects of religion [could] be replaced by equally beneficial non-religious substitutes.”

### ***Universality of Religion***

Dawkins is puzzled that interest in religion is so “widespread.” “Worshipping deities would seem to be an irrational and wasteful habit, yet it has been found in all cultures” (Reviewer).

Professor Dawkins toys with a potential problem in his reasoning. From his storehouse of “logical firepower” he raises the possible objection that if the theory of evolution were true, and natural selection **eliminates** that which is harmful in the development of the species, why hasn’t the religious impulse become obsolete? According to Dawkins, it is an unnecessary, even harmful, impediment to human development? He suggests that evolution “programmed” offspring to believe what they learn from parents, and one unprofitable by-product of this process is the belief in religion.

But how could the non-intelligent, materialistic forces of nature “program” anything? Can there be a program without a programmer? And what about the opposite side of that coin? Could it not be argued with equal force that atheism has been passed from atheist parents to children, and is an “irrational” and “wasteful” form of mental aberration? The famous theorist once again has met himself limping down the road of logical inconsistency.

The English author takes aim at four needs that religion is believed to satisfy: **explanation, exhortation, inspiration, and consolation.**

### ***Explanation***

Dawkins alleges that religion does not provide an explanation as to the origin of the universe and man, any more than it explains: “who created God?” The biblical answer is: no one created God. God is an eternal being (Psalm 90:2). No atheist, of course, would grant credence to the Bible testimony. The fact is, however, plain logic reinforces the scriptural affirmation.

- If something exists now, something must always have existed, for something cannot come from nothing. Something does now exist; thus, something has existed always.
- The “something” that has existed always must either be matter or mind. But the eternally-existing “something” is not matter, for matter is conceded to be temporal, not eternal (as evidenced by the Second Law of Thermodynamics). Thus, the eternal “something,” by default, must be “mind.”
- If the universe is characterized by order (*kosmos*) or “design,” the cause that produced it must be intelligent. Intelligence implies personality. Hence there must be a **personal cause** responsible for the universe.

While this argument is abbreviated, and limited, it is sufficient for the moment to reveal the folly of the “explanation” quibble.

In one of his books, Dawkins concedes that the complexity of living organisms manifests “apparent design”; and then he exclaims, “If anyone doesn’t agree that this amount of complex design cries out for an explanation, I give up” (1986, ix). He might as well raise the white flag, for materialism has no solution to the problem. Later, the professor wrote that “design” is “probably the most powerful reason for the belief, held by the vast majority of people that have ever lived, in some kind of supernatural deity.”

### ***Exhortation***

Dawkins contends that religion cannot be exhortative since it is not a legitimate source for re-enforcing morality. “If it were, Jews would still be executing those who work on the Sabbath.”

The author reveals that he knows virtually nothing about the Bible. The Jewish economy was a temporary system designed by God to prepare the Hebrews (and others through their influence) for the coming of Christ. There were strict measures enforcing the concept that God is the sovereign ruler of mankind, and that his revealed will must be obeyed. That law system, however, was abrogated with the implementation of the Christian economy. His argument is illogical.

### ***Inspiration***

Dawkins thinks that contemplation of the natural world is sufficient for any “inspiration” need that man might require. But reflection upon the natural world, lovely as that is, raises a myriad of complex questions. How did the ingenious “uni-verse” (not multi-verse) come to be? If the theory of evolution were true, how did living creatures derive from the non-living? How did dead matter create “awareness” and moral sensitivity? From the

atheistic vantage point, these questions are more frustrating than inspiring.

### **Consolation**

Where is the consolation in atheism? Totally absent! Skepticism is a black hole of despair. Here is what Dawkins said in an interview some years back regarding human beings. “You are for nothing. You are here to propagate your selfish genes. There is no higher purpose in life” (Bass, 1990).

Coming perilously close to being critical, Dawkins’ admiring reviewer in *The Economist* was forced to concede (after referring to the professor’s discussion of the amazing discoveries of modern physics) that: “only a minority will find as much consolation in quantum physics as in the prospect of reuniting with their dearly departed in heaven.”

Dawkins says we are here “to propagate” (his grammatical construction is an infinitive of **purpose**) in order to prove there really is “no purpose” in life. A purposeful, non-purposeful existence; grossly incoherent! The only “consolation” that Dawkins and his ideological kin can offer is a “cold hole in the ground.”

The unwitting confession of the pathetic British atheist, Bertrand Russell, provides a fitting conclusion: “the loneliness of the human soul is unendurable, nothing can penetrate it except the highest intensity of the sort of love that **religious teachers have preached**; whatever does not spring from this motive is harmful, or at best useless...” (quoted in Monk, 135; emp. WJ).

Again from the tormented pen of Russell (Monk, xix):

"Through the long years, I sought peace. I found ecstasy; I found anguish. I found madness; I found loneliness. I found solitary pain; that gnaws the heart. But peace I did not find." Such is the “consolation” of Dawkins’ atheism!

### **Conclusion**

Finally I must note that the professor depicts Christ as a teacher of “dodgy [suspect, dishonest, untrustworthy] family values.” His admiring reviewer says “Dawkins dreams of a day when atheists are as well-organized and influential as Christian conservatives.” His greater dream is that Christians (and all religionists) will someday vanish from the earth!

Dream on! Two centuries from now the impact of Richard Dawkins will be but a flyspeck note (if that much) on a yellow page of some obscure bibliography – while the name and influence of Jesus of Nazareth will reverberate around this globe (provided it still is here) as it has for virtually twenty centuries.

Atheism robs us of much; it provides us with nothing.