

BIOTHEISM

BIOTHEISM: GOD REDUX

I consider most religiosity to be little more than superstition, most religion to be functionally little more than crowd control, and most religious contentions to have been overthrown by science. It is not without reason that atheists say with increasing confidence that God is dead. However, although metaphysics may be, and is by definition, a matter of faith, paradoxically, the rejection or absence of metaphysical belief is equally based and dependent on faith. Metaphysics is unavoidable. So faith then is a matter not of unthinking passivity, but rather of the careful sifting of observable reality and the selection of that model of reality which most rationally addresses the indiscernible. Please allow me to propose a couple questions and then answer them toward demonstrating a rational philosophical basis for metaphysical belief.

Here is my first question: What is the source of all matter, of the material realm? Theists would readily respond by naming God as the source, whereas atheists would deny that there is a source. In contrast to both of these positions, agnostics would merely say that this cannot be known.

There are three types of theists: monotheists, polytheists and pantheists. Polytheism is untenable, and so it is nothing more than creeping monotheism. Monotheists conceptualize God in metaphysical terms as being apart from the material realm. Pantheists conceptualize the material realm in totality as being synonymous with God; therefore to pantheists the material realm is God eternal without origin. Interestingly, this leaves pantheists with a position here functionally similar to that of atheists in that for both the material realm is eternal without origin.

Like pantheists, agnostics too have a position here that is functionally similar to that of atheists because, in ostensibly not taking a position they necessarily adopt the conservative default position which says that it was as it is. Thus practically-speaking for agnostics the material realm is eternal without origin.

Let's move on to my second question: Who or what is the inherent authority in the universe? Theists would readily respond by naming God, whereas atheists would deny that there is any inherent authority. Agnostics again would merely say that this cannot be known.

The position of monotheists is straightforward: God is the inherent authority in the universe. At first glance, that of pantheists is similarly clear. However, pantheists, upon further reflection, would be forced to concede that because everything is God, therefore equally authoritative, nothing is inherently any more authoritative than anything else; so that there is functionally no authority. This leaves pantheists again with a position similar practically to that of atheists who outright deny that there is any inherent authority.

Like pantheists, agnostics again have a position here that is functionally similar to that of atheists. As with the previous question, in ostensibly not taking a position here they necessarily adopt the conservative default position – in this case the position which says that no authority may be acknowledged. Functionally this is equivalent to there being no inherent authority.

First cause and authority are the only two integral issues when considering God. One's positions on these two issues define one's ultimate stance on the question of God. Although at first glance it would appear that the field is divided into three camps, atheists, theists and agnostics, in fact it is divided into only two: theists and atheists. Theists include monotheists and polytheists who, as has been noted, are creeping monotheists. Atheists include atheists proper, pantheists (who are functionally atheists) and agnostics (who are also functionally atheists). Just as polytheism is an untenable stance, so too are pantheism and agnosticism.

We are left with two tenable stances on the question of God: atheism and monotheism. Let us consider them: If one believes that there is no God then one by default must accept the belief in material eternity and all that entails to maintain a rational position. Material eternity means that no matter has ever been created or come into being; all of it has always existed, merely fluctuating in form, describable but ultimately not explainable (as a whole); and the thirteen billion or so years since the Big Bang – not to mention the few decades since Hiroshima – are a mere blip in the span of eternity. Moreover, this incredibly intricate and complex structure of reality around us and of which we are part, which the

accumulated human thought of centuries has found to be in obedience to a body of laws rationally described, was not constituted by any rational being or force, but rather merely is, exists. On the other hand, with God you have an extrapolation unobservable by scientific means: this is its only problem, yet philosophically-speaking this is not a problem since such an extrapolation is by definition outside of the material realm and its tools of observation. This is not to say that this gives the metaphysical model a greater likelihood of being correct than the materialistic. Both rest on sound reasoning and each has its own incomprehensibility. Interestingly, the one cannot be proved without disproving the other, and the other by its internal structure cannot be disproved. Thus, either way, we are left with a matter of faith, rationally-defensible faith.

However, there is more to consider here than simply internal logic. Both monotheism and atheism have grave inadequacies. No monotheist to date has ever come up with a reasonable description of God's purpose. For what reason would an omnipotent and omniscient Being create the universe? Is there some need or desire that God had? And could the interaction that an omniscient and omnipotent God has supposedly had with us sentient beings be anything other than a game? How could it be otherwise in light of divine sovereignty? Is there any tenable way to square divine sovereignty and human free will? These are just some of the questions that monotheists hide from behind the cover of the incomprehensibility of God. There are no answers here, just inadequacy. The monotheists have no answers.

What about the atheists? They certainly relish making the same points about monotheism made here, all of these and more. But what about the inadequacies of their stance? Allusion has already been made to this complex structure of reality of which we are part, which according to atheists was not constituted by any rational being or force. This is very problematic. Even more problematic is their disregard of will. Atheists have every bit as much difficulty with will and being as monotheists have with divine sovereignty and human free will. There is no place in their simplistic reduction of reality to material terms for the existence of will. Yet will exists. Being exists. Beings exist. Atheists have no answers here, only a fundamental inadequacy.

Pantheism as discussed above is not life-centered. Rather, it is inclusive of all matter whether organic or not. This is abiocentric pantheism. In contrast to this I would like to introduce biotheism. Biotheism is biocentric pantheism, the belief that life is God. Biotheism is not only a form of pantheism, but in fact the only form of pantheism that is viable. Life per se is God, but the rest of reality is an outgrowth of God, thus the pantheistic element.

Here is biotheism's genesis account: Life in the beginning was a point in the nullity, the only point in the nullity of time and space. There was nothing, either physical or metaphysical, in the beginning apart from this point in the nullity that was life. This point in the nullity was everything: all being, all force, all understanding. Life, this point in the nullity, was and is God. Out of this beginning, this point in the nullity, arose the universe in its totality. By fiat, life summoned matter into being. At this moment of fiat God was dynamically omniscient and omnipotent. Since then God's omniscience and omnipotence have been latent. God's omnipresence has been unchanged from the beginning.

Unlike abiocentric pantheism, biotheism is not functionally atheism. Biotheism identifies a source of all matter: God. Biotheism not only identifies such source, but even locates the time and place that matter came into being: the Big Bang. There is no functional similarity between biotheism's identification of God as the source of all matter and atheism's eternal material realm without origin.

As to the question of the inherent authority in the universe, again biotheism stands in stark contrast to atheism. Although to the biotheist everything is an outgrowth of God, it is life per se that is God, that is the inherent authority in the universe. To atheists there is no inherent authority. To the biotheist there is, both theoretically and functionally. Whereas abiocentric pantheism is creeping atheism, biotheism – biocentric pantheism – is not.

Biotheism is viable as a form of theism. As such it does not have to address the inadequacies of atheism. However, it does have to address the inadequacies of theism.

Does biotheism square divine sovereignty and human free will? Yes, God's omniscience and omnipotence, having been embedded in the fabric of the universe, are latent. It is now only through the exertion of will by living beings that such omniscience and omnipotence are expressed; and such

expression is constrained by the limitations of the channels in which it moves. Moreover, unlike in the regular conception of theists, in the conception of the biotheist God does not know the future, God's omniscience does not extend to future events. In biotheism omniscience extends only to what exists. The future does not exist, and therefore cannot be known. This overcomes a cheat normally found in theism that turns the whole interaction of God and creation into a mere game. These two concepts together, the latent omniscience and omnipotence of God and the non-existence of the future, enable biotheism to reconcile divine sovereignty and human free will.

What is the purpose of the universe? Purpose per se is necessarily a metaphysical concept. Since it is a formulation of will, and will is part and parcel of being, purpose cannot exist, come into existence, independent of being. There can be no purpose where there is no purposer – in this universal sense, Purposer. So purpose, like authority, is a concept available only to the theist and denied to the atheist. Biotheism offers no complete answer to this question of purpose. By looking at life we can vaguely see the exertion of will, its spread in both space and time. Clearly there is an underlying purpose driving this process. Could this be evidence of some sort of divine self-actualization exercise? This seems like a good starting point for understanding here. However, any answer beyond this is speculative. Suffice to say that, unlike other theists, most or all of whom base their understanding of purpose on one or another of various sources of purportedly divine revelation, the biotheist depends on reason alone, interpreting the underlying patterns of reality he sees as manifestations of God's purpose, thus basing his formulations of divine purpose entirely on his perceptions of reality.

Within the tenable stance on the question of God that is theism, the biotheistic alternative overcomes the inadequacies inherent in the monotheistic perspective. Unlike all other approaches to the metaphysical – atheism included, biotheism is not only viable and tenable, but it is adequate as well.

Biotheism reconciles the physical and the metaphysical, demonstrating that the physical is the metaphysical. God is dead. Long live God! ¡Viva la Vida!

THE BIOTHEIST CREED

I believe in God, and that God is life.

I believe that life in the beginning was a point in the otherwise nullity of time and space. This point was everything: all being, all force, all understanding. Life, this point in the nullity, was and is God. Out of this point in the nullity arose the universe in its totality. By fiat, life summoned matter into being at the moment now called the Big Bang. At that moment God was dynamically omniscient and omnipotent. Since then God's omniscience and omnipotence have been latent, being embedded in the fabric of the universe. God's omnipresence has been unchanged from the beginning.

I believe that although everything is an outgrowth of God, it is life per se that is God, the inherent authority in the universe. God's omniscience and omnipotence being latent, it is now only through the exertion of will by living beings that such omniscience and omnipotence are expressed; and such expression is constrained by the limitations of the channels in which it moves. Furthermore, omniscience extends only to what exists: The future does not exist, and therefore cannot be known, not even by God.

I believe that will exists, being exists, beings exist; and that will is the unique aspect of being, exclusive to life. God is will. Life demonstrates the exertion of will, its spread in space and time. God's purpose is the underlying mechanism driving this process, a process of divine self-actualization. In the pursuit of an understanding of this divine self-actualization, we have reason alone, interpreting the underlying patterns of reality we see as manifestations of God's purpose, thus basing our formulations of divine purpose entirely on our perceptions of reality. Reason is divine revelation.

I believe that all thinkers are the servants of God to the extent that their reason is pure and significant, and that the greatest servant of God was Charles Darwin.

I believe that life, being God, is the metaphysical realm. The physical afterlife is offspring. The ethotic afterlife is the creation and sharing of knowledge and wisdom. The belief in God and the fact of

identity together provide rational hope for a metaphysical afterlife; however, such hope is entirely intangible and therefore should never be factored into the exertion of will, whether on the individual or societal basis.

I believe that God is neither male nor female, nor neuter. You and I, and every living thing, together are God. Not He, not She, but We.

I believe that there are three sacraments. Bonding, in all its forms, and mourning are two sides of one coin. But the greatest, most primal, sacrament of all is the procreative act, the holiest act in which any living being can engage.

And I believe that the exertion of will, its spread in both space and time, is the mission of all living things, impressed on the very depths of our beings by God Ourselves, and that homo sapiens, in critical ways the most advanced species of life, is uniquely capable, uniquely responsible, to undertake the spread of this mission to the ends of the universe.