

## **The Absurdity and Poverty of Atheism as An Existential Position**

**Jude. N. Uwalaka (PHD)**

*Directorate of General Studies Federal University of Technology, Owerri, Imo State Nigeria*

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### **ABSTRACT**

*God is an inescapable fact in human existentiality. He is a reality for the believer, an idea that continually haunts the Atheists and the indifferentists, and looms large languages of communication, our idioms and in our attitudinal reactions to issues and events. However the existence of God or otherwise has been a ragging question for the limited human mind, in the multiple challenges of human existence. The recent ravages of the Coronavirus Pandemic has exposed the fragility of human; existing caused his sense of being to be re-examined and the goal of human existence and his being the world re-interrogated. In this article I want to examine from a purely rational philosophical and Common sense path, the atheistic claims against God's existence and his relevance for human existence and destiny. Our enquiry leads us to the conclusion that the Atheistic and Agonistic claims are horribly absurd and terribly deficient..*

**KEYWORDS:** *Atheism, absurdity, God, reason, objective morality, agnosticism, evolution, spirituality, science.*

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### **I. INTRODUCTION**

All over the world and indeed for majority of people, God is so obvious and daily implicated in the life of people. In moments of joy and sadness; in music and sports, God is readily invoked. The best of music compositions has God as the subject matter, He is worshipped and many declare his favours, goodness and benevolences.

However, mostly in contemporary times many a man openly and boldly in their discussions and writings, claim to be Atheists and non-believers. Given the above contrasting visions and attitudes, the problematic to be addressed are: How truly rational is the position that God does not exist. Is man naturally led to acknowledge, God's existence which if he does not do could be seen as, rationally and morally culpable. What leads or makes people Atheists? Is it a rational or faith conviction? We will from purely rational, philosophical and common sense perspective arrive at the conclusion on the Absurdity and poverty of Atheism both as rational and Existential position. Atheism is indeed a fundamental ingratitude.

### **ATHEISM AND ITS KINDS**

Two descriptions of atheism in spite of its complexity and nuances would do for this work. One is that which contrasts with the theistic belief that there is God, who puts the world and all there is in existence and involved in the world through his Will and providence. The Atheist thus declares lack of belief in God or the belief that there is no God or gods. Hence, no existence of any kind of an intelligent Cause that brings about the world.

The second description is that of Hans Kung. For him, atheism properly so called does not deny merely a plurality of gods or merely a particular way of worshipping God or even simply a personal "theistic" God. It denies any God and any divine reality, whether understood mythological, theologically, or philosophically.<sup>1</sup>

It is possible that some individuals in various cultures at various times, hiding in the inner loneliness of their souls, had perhaps been silent Atheists, but if this even happened in the remote past, the phenomenon of atheism was something not spoken about, a taboo, because God was seen as the Sovereign owner and Lord of the universe. However, atheism as a position, or even ideology, celebrated, defended, and propagated as a worldview, came within the Western and European Cultural upheavals of the early modern period, following the radical attack on the church and religion by the Secularists, the Enlightenment scholars and historic misunderstanding between Modern Science and the Church Authorities and the liberalization movement in the European world.

Jonathan Sacks gave a narrative of the emerging atheism as a counter force to religion. He said: "There was the rise of the experimental sciences in the seventeenth century, the discovery that you could find out more about the world by observing it and framing hypothesis that could be tested, than by relying on past traditions: what Don Cupitt calls the shift from myths to maths. There was the revolutionary changes in the way human

beings were perceived: Spinoza's insistence that man too is a part of nature, and subject to its laws; Marx's suggestion that our ideas are the product of economic forces and Darwin's suggestion that as someone once put it, man's family tree goes back to the time when his ancestors were swinging from it. Individually, these weakened the hold of the narrative in the first chapter of Genesis in which man was created in the image of God. Collectively, they suggested the power of free enquiry as against the authority of ancient texts when it came to the pursuit of knowledge.... Once thinkers were able to distance themselves from religion's claims, they were able to see it as a phenomenon to be explained like any other, in terms of economics or psychology, the projection into heaven of human interests and needs. The Supernatural had a natural explanation, and this weakened the idea of a Divine intrusion into the human domain, immune to the realities of time. The ideas central to the bible, of revelation, miracle and redemption were undermined."<sup>2</sup>

To complete the story emerged those that could be called the real inventors of Orthodox Atheism that would seek to mock God and install godlessness. These are the "Patriarchs" of atheism, their high priests and foot soldiers who popularized atheism with their provocative philosophical and blasphemous statements about and on God.

There is Feuerbach, for whom God is a projection of man. God is nothing but human fantasy, a hypostatized reflection of man, behind which nothing exist in reality. In reality, the attributes of God belong to man. Man is God to man. Religion is man's self-worship. God as believed by Religion is then God of the hereafter at the expense of the here and now; at the expense of human beings and their true greatness.<sup>3</sup>

After him would be Karl Marx, for whom God is a consolation of vested interests; a God of the rulers, of unjust social conditions, of deformed consciousness and false consolation. Of course, he is generally remembered for his notorious statement that religion is the opium of the people, a kind of spiritual intoxicant, in which the slaves of capital drown their humanity and blunt their desire for a decent existence. Thus Religion is both product and alienation of man."<sup>4</sup>

Then entered Nietzsche in his ceremony for the death of God, and in a famous passage, Nietzsche imagined the speech of the madman who announces to a secular world that God is dead and we have killed him; that the belief in the Christian God has become unbelievable. With him will be the rise of Nihilism and an unequalled critique of the Judaeo-Christian Ethical tradition which he regarded as a pious fraud, the bonds placed by the weak upon the strong.<sup>5</sup>

Freud will launch his psychological interpretation of God as Infantile illusion, a tyrannical Superego, the false image of infantile needs, of obsessive ritual arising from guilt Complex, a father Complex or an Oedipus Complex. Religion, he claimed, arose out of the oldest, strongest, and most urgent wishes of mankind. Religion is wishful thinking, illusion.<sup>6</sup>

The above critics, I will prefer to call, modern "patriarchs" of Atheism; I will include Arthur Schopenhauer as their great inspirator, as he believed that the core of reality is Will, a blind incessant impulse, the primordial source of that which is the prime Mover of all activity, a pervasive force that manifests itself as nature, uncontrollable by man bent on his ultimate destruction. His dissociation of reason from 'Will' will lead people to godlessness. He will inspire the psychological radicalism of Nietzsche – the Will to Power; Freud's Psychology of the Unconscious and the so-called 'instinctive power' of the libido. He is the father of vitalistic irrationality, Manichean in essence, the irrational tool of a merciless Will.<sup>7</sup> It will also inspire the atheism that preaches freedom as absolute. We remember immediately Jean Paul Sartre for whom – existence precedes essence since essence would constitute a limitation to his freedom. He will say that there is no human nature, since there is no God to conceive it.<sup>8</sup>

Auguste Comte will inspire the brand of atheism that would make Science greater than God and a worldly utopianism that would rival heaven. He claimed "Love is my principle, Order is my basis, Progress is my aim". He detested traditional religions, and sought a new religion of Positivism in which the "Slaves of God" would be transformed into the "Servants of humanity". He wrote: "today the Servants of Humanity are ousting the Servants of God."<sup>9</sup>

In our world today the foot soldiers of atheism would include Richard Dawkins, Christopher Hitchens, Kai Nielsen J.I. Mackie, members of the atheistic groups and associations and so-called free thinkers who are unleashing their anti-God propaganda and their vile attacks on Religion especially the Christian religion.

From what we have said about these atheistic thinkers and their inspirations, one can see that there are varieties of atheism and their inspirations, and even motivations. In spite of that we can still see their common features and basic claims.

## **BASIC CLAIMS OF ATHEISM**

1. They uphold one form or other of naturalism and materialism. Naturalism is the belief that all phenomena can be explained in terms of natural causes and laws or natural laws. Hence for them there is no spiritual or supernatural causation, no supernatural realm, no God, no Spirits. For materialism the ultimate reality is matter and its transformation: So the universe is material and measurable. Man is a bundle of matter.

2. They uphold scientific rationality and even for some, scientism. Atheists brand scientific rationality as the reliable process of investigation. Hence, he seeks for scientific evidence. Science becomes for them the tool and bedrock to replace Religion, as already seen in Auguste Comte and Thomas Huxley. They later sought to install scientists as the new Priests for mankind. Thus some atheists will espouse a kind of scientism which would make scientific process, methodology and validation the only path to discover the truth.

They enlist themselves with scientific humanism and in the spirit of the Enlightenment believing that Science can solve almost all problems, espousing a kind of utopia that perfect society can be constructed. They reject any doctrine of original sin and focus on the possibilities for human growth and development, the self-perfectibility of man. Science would fathom the mysteries of nature, and technology would harvest its treasures and progress will be continuous.

3. They claim to build their arguments on logic and evidence; free thinkers not bound by outdated and oppressive myths. Hence, they insist on the importance of skepticism and critical thinking.

4. They castigate the proofs of the existence of God claiming that they were no proofs. Their argument falls into two parts: that supporting evidence is not good enough to affirm God and that the idea of God's existence is illogical contrary to the evidence at hand. They talked about logical evidences against God's existence; they cite apparent contradictions in the bible and philosophical difficulties relating to God. They readily brandish the so-called problem of Evil, namely that God is supposed to be all-good and all-powerful but Evil and Suffering exist in the world. If God is all-Good, he would not want Evil and Suffering to exist. If he is all-Powerful, then he is able to remove all evil and suffering. Since evil and suffering exist, they then concluded that either God is not all-good (which means not perfect and not God) or he is not all-powerful.

5. They espouse that theory of Evolution as a scientific fact. So they explained everything that exists as a product of chance. They would agree with Hawkings that the universe simply is.

6. Morality is relative. There is no transcendent source of morality. They claim that Religion significantly obstructs moral development and keeps us in a state of dependency. "It took away from us the need through trial and error, to find things out for ourselves. We become restless with a demanding father who dictated terms of existence. Religion made us moral children and if we were to reach maturity we would have to do without it. From this they claimed that morality must be divorced from theistic visions of the universe. There are neither objective universal moral standards nor a Divine law giver.<sup>10</sup> Morality is a matter of individual choice free from paternalistic authority.

Of course, all the features we mentioned above may not be shared taken together, by all atheists in their individuality or basic motivations. After all, people came to call themselves atheists from various paths and various circumstances. Yet, most atheists will embrace the features though may not be with the same intensity and passion. And this difference will lead us to recognize two broad types of atheists today:

**There is the Militant Atheists.** These, not only do not believe in God or gods, they denounce them and all religions. They feel a "missionary" temper to spread the atheistic Creed to all countries of the world. Some of them I will call hate-Atheists, are vile, rude and tempestuous in their reactions and attitude to the things of God. Their language is full of insult, venom, profanity and blasphemous. If they have the power, they would decree away all gods; sack them from their sanctuaries, pass a Capital punishment on them, their worshippers, and admirers. Referring to this type of Atheism especially with Richard Darwkins, and his work, the God Delusion, J. Angelo Corlett said "In studying, Richard Darwkins, The God Delusion, one is left with the impression that he is on an evangelical mission to "Go into all the world and preach the gospel of scientific Atheism."<sup>11</sup>

**The other group falls under the Weak Atheists.** These simply exercise no faith in God. I will call this attitude of Paul Kurtz, in these statements as an example of a Weak atheist. He said: "As secular humanists we are surely skeptical of the reigning religions of the day. Theistic truth-claims have no foundation in Empirical fact. They are holdovers of the age of Enlightenment and the progress of Science. These mythic belief systems are no doubt able to maintain their grip because of their ability to indoctrinate the young and in many societies because of their access to authoritarian ...control.... But a caution. We surely do not wish to denude the organic moral structures within society, that religious institutions for all of their faults, still provide. We surely do not wish to deny freedom of conscience to those who believe religious dogmas. We seek to protect the right of unbelievers. Our goal is to build secular humanistic institutions as alternatives for those who wish them."<sup>12</sup>

Among this group we will include Agnostics like Bertrand Russell, who refused to be called an Atheist, despite his position that no one can assert the existence and non existence of God.<sup>13</sup> Our concern in this Essay while considering Atheism in general will focus more, on these militant/hate atheists.

### **THE ABSURDITY AND POVERTY OF ATHEISM**

We have seen the reasons or prejudices the atheists have for denouncing God and the things of God. With all the noise and bravado the atheists display about their non-belief or lack of belief about God, one would have thought that they were indeed armed to fight and banish God, but as could be seen, it ended up being a mere shadow boxing. Atheism comes across like a hollow Iroko destined for a big fall before the storm, or to borrow Shakespeare's phrases "full of sound and fury signifying nothing." There is confusion in the kingdom of atheism; intellectual confusion, moral confusion, existential confusion, ontological confusion, logical confusion and conceptual confusion. It promises much but delivers little:

#### **Atheism does not follow her own methodology and fails her Test of Evidence:**

First of all Atheism, enunciated her conditions of so-called free and unchained enquiry, respect for evidence, scientific rationality and avoidance of unsubstantiated claims. The first failure of atheism is that its claims and denials are not a product of such a procedure.

What evidence has it that God does not exist? God is not a physical reality; where is the evidence that God does not exist? Let us for the sake of argument say that the traditional proofs of God's existence are disproved by the atheists. Does the insufficiency of the logical proofs, mean that God himself being proved does not exist? Does man's inability to prove God mean that he does not exist? Is it the proving of God that makes his existence possible? And Thomas Reid observed "Beliefs are innocent until proven guilty".<sup>14</sup> Angelo Corlett adds that "the mere refutation of a position is not itself an epistemic entitlement to accept its denial".<sup>15</sup>

Where is the atheists' proof or evidence that at the beginning God was not there and will not be there at the end? The atheists can fight with the logical proofs as much as they can but they cannot disprove God's existence. To this J. Angelo Corlett observed "some Agnostics and Atheists insist that theists must make their arguments conform to the best finding of scientific investigation. Some have even imposed some versions of scientific verificationism or falsificationism on the argument of theists. The basic point here is that since God is not an object of empirical observation, there is no falsifiable or verifiable conception of God. Thus the idea of God is not a matter of human knowledge".<sup>16</sup>

Etienne Gilson has equally argued that the theists are wrong by assuming that "Nothing can be rationally known unless it be scientifically known which is far from being an evident proposition"<sup>17</sup>

And as Dr. Mortimer Adler said: "An affirmative existential proposition can be proved but a negative existential proposition that denies the existence of something cannot be proved". Unless the person can be in all places of the entire universe at the same time, they have no way of confirming that whatever they claim does not exist. This is the undoing of the atheist. Where and where does he look for God? Even if he sees him, how does he identify him since he does not know him?

#### **Atheism fails her Test of Scientific Rationality and the Limitations of Evolution**

Here again, the so-called scientific rationality will be of no help. They want us to accept only what has been scientifically proved, yet science cannot prove that God does not exist, neither in its methodology nor as an object of study. For God as the theists proclaim him does not belong to the natural process, and as Hans Kung said: "... the question of what there was before the Big Bang and before there was any hydrogen, the great question of why there is something instead of nothing – is a fundamentally human question. The scientist cannot supply the answer because it lies beyond the horizon of experience."<sup>18</sup>

Evolution cannot equally help because it has not the capacity to tell us what caused the universe to exist, who or what is responsible for the first thing that evolved? The atheists have failed to tell us how an impersonal non-conscious, meaningless, purposeless and immoral universe accidentally produced (made) personal, conscious, moral beings who are obsessed with meaning and purpose. Commenting on the Evolution postulate Pope Francis observes. "Human beings even if we postulate a process of Evolution also possess a uniqueness which cannot be fully explained by the Evolution of other open systems. Each of us has his or her own personal identity and is capable of entering into dialogue with others and with God himself. Our capacity to reason, to develop argument, to be inventive, to interpret reality and to create arts along other not yet discovered capacities, are signs of a uniqueness which transcends the sphere of physics and biology. The sheer novelty

involved in the emergence of a personal being within a material universe presupposes a direct action of God and a particular call to life and to relationship on the part of a 'Thou' who addresses himself to another "Thou".<sup>19</sup> To buttress further the fact that Evolution is deficient to deny God, Michael Polanyi observed "It is the height of intellectual perversion to renounce in the name of scientific objectivity, our position as the highest form of life on earth, and our own advent by a process or evolution as the most important problem of evolution"<sup>20</sup> So the emergence of man demands more than the evolutionary process in Nature.

### **Science Disowns Atheism**

The atheist brandish science as the know-all and solve-all; but the scientists now are more humble. The Biblical Origin of the universe is a testimony which science can neither confirm nor refute – that at the beginning God was and is. Even the scientists are becoming more intrigued and confused in what is happening in their own domain, what more of going beyond their realm. One only needs to go to the world of the atom and see how the old certitudes are being busted. Appeal to naturalism will even not do because naturalism has not explained all phenomena known today nor can we assert that it can explain all the future because we do not know all phenomena that will occur. The truth of the matter, however, is that the atheists have disproved nothing of the proofs for the existence of God. The argument from design and order which very much demand intelligence will remain there to challenge their atheistic intellectual obstinacy and shortcoming. In fact, in this respect science is dumping more Atheists' positions and giving more support to the Theists.

Looking at the intricate complexities of the universe, scientists marvel that humanity's existence came to be at all. Many scientific scholars acknowledge that it is against all mathematical odds that all of the universe's cosmic constants and biological mechanisms necessary for life would come to be and yet we have humanity. This of course supports a supreme power ensuring that the complexities achieve their goal. This, theists call God and the atheists have no answer; a "no answer" they call Chance. In fact, science is giving more comfort to those who point to a transcendent Creator. "The death of the steady state theory and the current understanding that the universe as we know it exploded out of nothing into existence, the incredible fine-tuning of the universe for human life, the confirmation of specified complexity like DNA that in a single strand contains digital information equivalent to 600,000 pages of intelligence and is mathematically identical to a language, all act as pointers to an intellectual source that is behind it all".<sup>21</sup>

So from the above, one can see that the theists position is being strengthened by evidence from the sciences as the atheists continue in their logical sophism and platitudes.

### **Problem of Evil does not Disprove God: God is not Man; so His Thoughts**

The so-called 'problem of evil' is of course problematic for our finite minds, unable to understand how the things we call evil square up with the overall providential and loving plan of God as the theists present it. But one could query Must God be said to be not all-loving or not all-knowing because the atheistic finite mind cannot totally comprehend the total plan of the infinite mind of God for his universe and for humanity? Like an author observed, the problem of the all-loving and all-powerful God with regard to the so-called Evil, smacks of a false dichotomy, for there are more than two possibilities namely, God might have a reason for allowing what we may call evil and suffering; man's freedom might allow putting up with what we call Evil and Suffering. However, at the end, what the atheists must know is that man does not stand in the same pedestal of vision and judgment with God. And to presume that, because our evaluation may not match God's own, and because of our inadequacies and confusion declare him non-existent, is the height of the atheists' grandstanding and ontological arrogance. This is in line with the argument that if one says that a position is not well grounded in reason; he is not justified to make a jump to assert that the opposite is correct. This is true because it might be the case that the sufficient reasons that would ground that position might exist but remain undiscovered.

The Atheist is not satisfied to be man, he wants to be like God. But as Victor E. Frankl would say, the "ultimate meaning necessarily exceeds and surpasses the finite intellectual capacities of man; in logotherapy, we speak, in this context, of a supra-meaning. What is demanded of man is, not as some existentialist philosophers teach, to endure the meaninglessness of life; but rather to bear his incapacity to grasp the unconditional meaningfulness in rational terms. Logos is deeper than logic"<sup>22</sup>

Hence St. Augustine would say: "If you understand him he is not God" (Sermo 52,16). Man should be humble to accept that even though our reason, and deep intuitions convince us that God exists, and which the faith of the believer affirms with certainty, in spite of the apparent silence of God at times, and yet we must not forget that we have no God's eye view of things both the things we call good and the ones we call evil. Man sees in perspectives, in graduations, in atomic quantities.

Atheism looks more like a process of the "godification" of man, a feuerbachian legacy but that is where the self delusion of the atheist starts.

### **Man's Spirituality and the Dis-oriented Anthropology of the Atheism**

The Atheists' denial of God's existence is not indeed because of any preponderance of evidence on their part, but merely a vacuous claim, a product of either false judgment, or moral and intellectual defeatism. In fact, the preponderance of evidence and support are with the theists. First the theists have the logical proofs of God's existence despite the inadequacies; then they have the fundamental intuition that the existence of anything, including ourselves, automatically makes the existence of God more than a guesswork or a mere probability. If I exist, why cannot God, given other supporting grounds, not exist? What right have I or any atheist to determine whether or if he must exist or not? The intuition of a being at the ground of all being is so strong and overwhelming. The fundamental question which the atheist must still face is, "why is there something and not nothing?" and "how is it possible for Being to come from Non-being?"

There is man's natural striving or natural cry to God as a thing cries to its owner. This is a cry of the heart, which often comes in wishes, in prayers, in worship, in wonderment, which a human being lets out to the one whom he considers to be the power behind his existence. There is an interior call, a dynamics moving him to go from the finite to the infinite, from the exterior to the interior, from the superficial to the depth; from the conditioned to the unconditioned. For the theists, this search, this movement is man's search for an encounter with God. Man is a pilgrim for the absolute. Hence, St. Augustine said "you have made us for you (O Lord) and our heart is always restless till it finds its rest in you", and Another author would say, "man is a being sick of God." <sup>23</sup>. This natural cry and orientation towards God, the Atheist cannot just wish away. Thus Berkof observed "In view of the *semen religionis* is implanted in every man by his creation in the image of God, it is safe to assume that no one is born on Atheist. ...It is deliberately blind to... suppress the most fundamental instinct of man, the deepest needs of the soul, the highest aspirations of the human spirit, and the longings of a heart that gropes after some higher Being. This practical or intellectual suppression of the operation of the *semen religionis* (seed of religion) often involves prolonged and painful struggles". <sup>24</sup>

One of the great tragedies of the Atheist is his faulty and distorted anthropology. Having reduced man to a bundle or heap of matter, he is at a loss to explain the mysterious human reality, man who manifests activities that are material and spiritual, who at the same time can be present and absent, concrete and abstract; with an interiority and exteriority. Our activities of thinking, willing, imagining, speculations, projections, quest for comprehension are minor miracles, that cannot be adequately explained by the atheist by calling them epiphenomenon; nothing is explained by using one name for another. The problems of interior life as Pope Benedict XVI would say cannot be merely explained away in neurological reductionism or psychology. It simply manifest the spiritual element and force in man, which confirm the religious belief that man is born with an immortal soul, and create in the image and likeness of God and so when man is far away from God, he is unsettled and ill at ease. It cannot be doubted that many of modern man's social and psychological alienation and neurosis as the Pope would say is attributable in part to spiritual factors. The new form of slavery to drugs and the lack of hope into which so many people fall can be explained not only in sociological and psychological terms but also in spiritual terms.

The emptiness in which the soul feels abandoned, despite the availability of countless therapies for body and psyche leads to suffering. <sup>25</sup>

The spiritual and interior disorientation which modern man suffers today is symptomatic, of a being that is suffering from a fundamental disorientation and alienation, a being that has lost his existential compass, and wandering away from his source and goal-his creator God. This is a fundamental homelessness and existential indigence to which atheism sentences man.

### **Man's Certified Religious Experiences**

We have the vast personal and religious experiences of man and various dramatic religious experiences which have been actively investigated, reported, some publicly corroborated. Miracles, events, which defy natural explanation have been experienced and authenticated within religious activities. And yet the atheist blindly and uninvestigatively dismisses and explains them away because of the atheists' intellectual dogmatic stubbornness not to be open to God's existence. It is this frustration that made Rowan Williams, the Archbishop of Canterbury once declared: "The religious believer says that moral integrity, self-introspection, honesty and trust are styles of living that connect with the character of an eternal and free Agency, the Agency most religions call God. Agree or disagree, I would say to critics, at least grasp what is being talked about. Often, the atheist seems to be talking about something else". Even though individually, as proofs of God's existence and actions, each of the theistic evidences, on their own, may not be enough, but all the above theists' evidences taken together gives a preponderance of evidence for the theistic perspective more than that of the atheist.

Knowledge may not come from rational thought alone. Bertrand Russell, the great mathematician and Agnostic was honest to admit "No sensible man however Agnostic has faith in reason alone. <sup>26</sup> Even love opens up a layer of reality which cannot be known by reason. Human experiences of God are multiple and go beyond nations and culture. It is in vain that the Atheist seeks to question his existence, because it could often be the

experience of life before it is that of rational discourse. Pope Benedict was right to observe. “Yet neither is there any doubt that God truly enters into human affairs. When, rather than being present merely in our thinking, he himself comes towards us and speaks to us. Reason therefore needs faith if it is to be completely itself. Reason and faith need one another in order to fulfill their true nature and their mission

### **The Intellectual and Moral Defeatism of Atheism**

One is tempted to see the atheists’ lack of openness and refusal to be persuaded by the pointers to God’s existence as due to moral and intellectual defeatism. They seem to be overwhelmed by the moral and intellectual challenges and tasks demanded by a rigorous and painstaking effort to go beyond the superficial to the deeper meanings of experiences and discourses required for such fundamental questions of life. This makes us to recall what Pope John Paul II said in respect to modern man’s attitude to metaphysical questions. Writing in his Encyclical, *Fides et Ratio*, he insisted on the “need for a philosophy of genuinely metaphysical range capable, that is, of transcending empirical data in order to attain something absolute, ultimate, and foundational in its search for truth. This requirement is implicit in sapiential and analytical knowledge alike; and in particular it is a requirement for knowing the moral good, which has its ultimate foundation in the Supreme Good; God himself. Here I do not mean to speak of metaphysics in the sense of a specific school of a particular historical current of thought. I want only to state that reality and truth; to transcend the factual and the empirical, and to vindicate the human beings capacity to know this transcendental and metaphysical dimension in a way that is true and certain, albeit imperfect and analogical.”<sup>27</sup> God is not of the order of the physical but the metaphysical.

The failure to grasp and embrace God as that at the foundation of existence, could also be as a result of modern man’s moral timidity and defeatism, because such a recognition could implicate them to a moral challenge demanded by theistically oriented morality. Could this be a reaction to the actual disappointment with the moral rigidity of religious institutions than a real intellectual conviction in the non-existence of God? If so, and it appears so, Atheism can be called a specimen of a philosophy of anger. However, whether the Atheists come to embrace God or not, one thing certain is that many of them are just engaging in a type of existential escapism and self-denial, before the great questions of existence which they must sooner or later confront. The God they refuse to acknowledge will continue to haunt them, since no one can escape his ‘shadow’ and the ground of man’s being and his final destiny. Atheism is a postponed anxiety and a truth postponed: the great questions of the whence, and whither, why and wherefore, of humanity and the world.

In the orientation to follow in these questions, I find the atheistic choice perplexing, that is, that not affirming God and its existential implications is more worthy of humans and their destiny than affirming God which is morally and intellectually more grounded.

This brings us to the famous Paschal’s Wager. Blaise Paschal tells us what a responsible and intelligent man should opt for before his final destiny options. He said: “If you believe in God and turn out to be incorrect, you have lost nothing – but if you don’t believe in God and turn out to be incorrect, you will go to hell. Therefore, it is foolish to be an Atheist”<sup>28</sup>. So, at times, atheism appears more to be a foolhardy moral defiance than a rational moral conviction.

### **Atheism Also an act of Faith**

From the above analysis so far, it is clear that most people are not atheists due to any rational or intellectual conviction or evidence or fact because there is not any that could really persuade any serious critical mind to be an atheist. I make bold to say that it is more of an act of faith. Atheism is like a Religious and belief system. An atheistic scientist George Klein was honest when he admitted “I am an atheist. My attitude is not based on science but rather on faith .... The absence of a Creator, the non-existence of God is my childhood faith, my adult belief unshakable and holy.”<sup>29</sup> Thus atheism itself is a kind of religion, but one enjoying the status of a faith-conviction contrary to its supposed scientificity and criticality. However, being a faith-conviction contrary to what the atheist would say is not necessarily bad, as long as it is based on informed and rational faith. After all, a big dimension of our life is based on faith. Science itself operates because it has faith in logic, in mathematics, in the human reason, and in the intelligibility of the universe.

Thus atheism should swallow her pride and apologize for her depreciation of faith since it is herself a product of faith in the non-existence of God, faith in the law of logic, faith in human rationality and in scientific rationality. Although by denying God, he ends up in with not only a bad faith but also a mad faith.

## **II. CONCLUSION**

We can claim that we have attempted to show through the path of reason that in many ways, the Atheism positions were not all the time inspired by any serious intellectual or logical evidence and many could be accused of some intellectual arrogance and grandstanding. Many a time we see that some choices were misguided, symptomatic of some moral or intellectual defiance. Some could be accused of exaggeration and over-simplification in their arguments, which beclouded their sense of judgment. They display some bad faith,

when they found it difficult to acknowledge evident truths and the inevitable consequences of their own positions and presuppositions. They cannot claim innocent or ignorant of the moral consequences of their philosophical positions which are doing havoc to the human society. Did not Nietzsche himself foresee the moral nihilism and anarchy that will befall humanity without God? At times one gets an impression that they were fighting God rather than engaging in a serious discussion on God's existence. All the vile and insulting and blasphemous language against God and religious institutions cannot be a part of demonstrating the validity of their positions but show them to be intellectually and morally bankrupt. One notices a certain imprudence, cavalier and carefree attitude in the way they treat the great questions of our human existence which smack of some light mindedness and underestimation of the eternal and serious consequences of such decisions.

Their bizarre faith in matter as the originating source of their being, and their pride in being tied to its destiny confounds us, a faith we consider very irrational, unworthy of the nobility of our humanity, in spite of the preponderance of evidence in favour of the theistic position. A rational mind in this case should normally have preferred to entrust his life and destiny to a personal, loving, all-knowing being we call God over an impersonal, non-conscious, meaningless, purposeless and amoral universe. Not of course the atheist in his penchant for controversy and unnecessary exhibitionism. In fact, an atheist gives me an image of a suicidal bomber who cares little about his own life and that of others. Even if God is only a mere hypothesis of the philosophers, one advanced as the origin and creator of all that are, any serious and responsible human being who hypothetically could have been a product of that love and divine creation, love and providence in the absence of any surer alternative, could have still shown some degree of respect to that our possible origin; and not to pour insults. The fact that atheists abuse God, mock and scorn him in the absence of any surer alternative shows the depth of their disregard, fundamental ingratitude, and uncommon insensitivity. In general, any atheist who falls into our descriptions above can surely be called a fundamental ingrate; others could be suffering from a dangerous delusion. Hence the poverty of Atheism.

Man must face the fundamental questions of his existence and when he humbly, truthfully, prudently, intelligently, and dispassionately, considers them he will inexorably be led to God.

Dr. John Lennox was right when he said: "There are not many options – essentially just two. Either human intelligence ultimately owes its origin to mindless matter or there is a creator. It is strange that some people claim that it is their intelligence that leads them to prefer the first to this second". This is the crux of the atheist's Fundamental poverty and Absurdity.

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