

## *Discussion about Buddhism*

**From Elise - sent at 2:47pm IST on September 16, 2010**

Hi!

First of all.. What's your name? :)

I have to say that it was a really interesting and long message you've send me. I had a lot to think about. I know it takes an effort to write such a long message (especially when you have so little time), so thanks for making that effort. :)

So why did you go to Sri Lanka? Is it more common there to be a monk or is there another reason?

I think it sounds nice that you all feel like you're family. We had this tv show here in Belgium about all the different kind of religions there are in the world. I still remember this episode about Zen Buddhism in Japan. Is it totally the same as that? If so, then I can imagine a bit how your life looks like. I think it was one of the most interesting episodes of that tv show. I could understand why they wanted to become a monk, but it looked really hard to keep up with it. The hours when they were meditating looked really exhausting because they had to sit in the same position for hours. I don't know where they find the strength to do that.

So I suppose that the problems you all deal with are more religious or am I wrong?

It's maybe a stupid questions but you say that there is no killing, stealing, sex, telling lies, drinking alcohol or using drugs.. but for someone who is 23, don't you miss some of those things (not the killing, stealing, ...) that you can't do when you're a monk? So you're never planning on having kids or falling in love or ... in the future?

So is being a monk something people intend to do their whole life?

I've searched on the forum of interpals to read some topics and I've noticed that religion is a very difficult subject. I've been raised catholic and I had to go to church every week until I was around 17 years old, I think. For me going to church every week didn't had a special meaning because I didn't felt like I wanted to do that. I believe that there's a God (maybe because I'm raised that way), but I don't necessarily think the church or the bible are an important part of it. I just believe there's something bigger than us humans. I think I'm pretty open minded about how people think and what they believe in. When people are different than me, I consider it as an opportunity to learn from them so I can see what's out there that I don't know about. But! I also think that any form of violence is never a good thing.

I never really thought about religion that much, so sorry if I'm asking stupid questions. :)

So do you actually feel the meaning of the life you're leading? I'm just wondering where the feeling that you're supposed to do this, comes from.

So you say that you don't know if you will have the chance to explore your spirituality after you're dead.. Are you scared of dying?

What do you think about when you're meditating? Is there a prayer that you say in your head or is it something else?

What about the friends you had in your previous life (when you weren't a monk)? You don't have any contact with them anymore? Wasn't it hard adjusting in the beginning?

So for food you depend on what people bring you? That must be hard not to be able to eat in the afternoon and evening. I probably wouldn't survive that long without food. I managed to eat the food my mom is eating for a diet a whole week, but I stopped because I got headaches and I got dizzy a lot. I think it's because of the fact that I have a low blood pressure most of the time. I still remember that I was in the hospital 2 years ago to get my wisdom teeth removed and I was there in the morning (I was the first one) and I went home after everybody else was gone because they thought my blood pressure was too low. :p Not that it's an interesting subject, but ok.. :)

What don't you understand about relationships? I think it can be hard to understand when you think about it too much. A relationship is just a label they put on 2 people in love. It's nothing more than 2 people who love each other that much that they want to be together for a long time. But I don't think you become one person when you have a relationship, like some people think. I think you are still a separate person with individual thoughts and needs.

Don't worry, I'm not angry that you left your girlfriend. :) I think it's a bit of a sad story, but if you had the feeling that you had to do something else with your life, then I think that's the right decision for you. But only you can make that decision, so it's not up to me to judge the choice you've made.

Why did you think your girlfriend wasn't happy enough? Sure, we're never completely satisfied and we always want more, because we can. When I find someone that I love so much, just being with him and knowing that he loves me too, will be the most important thing. Sure, we also want a house and we want to have money, but for me it's because you can have all those things, not because I wouldn't be able to live without those things. When the person you love the most leaves you, all those material things won't make you happy.

So how did your family react on the fact that you wanted to become a monk?

No, of course you shouldn't feel guilty for the decision you've made. It was a decision you had to make to give your life meaning, I guess. So it was the right decision. How did she react when you said that you weren't coming back?

My life-story isn't that interesting as yours, I have to say. I think I've had a pretty normal life. I have an older brother who's 30 and an older sister who's 33, so when I was younger I was pretty fast more mature than other kids of my age.. I was really shy and didn't say a lot when I was little, but in some way everybody was always nice to me. I had a pretty good childhood.

When it came to making a decision on what I was going to study, I made an inconvenient decision. Because of the fact that I studied social work I challenged myself to become more social. People who judged me on how I was when I was younger, didn't believe that I would be able to graduate, but I did! And now people who were for example in my class when I was younger, are now really surprised that I'm that open. It's stupid but that is a big deal for me because I feel like I was able to develop my inner self. I've made some pretty good friends during social work (for example my best friend) and they mean a lot to me. Also my internship I did in a visiting room for kids with their parents was really hard for me. I got confronted with some weak points of myself and dealing with that wasn't easy, but I've learned from it. I've learned that even when it gets hard, I keep going. I just started living at home again after a year living in a studio on my own (while I studied Psychology because I wanted to learn more about people) and now I'm searching for a job.

As for relationships, I haven't had a boyfriend in 4 years, because I've promised myself to not start a relationship until you

want to go for it 100%. Up till now I didn't had the feeling that I wanted to go a 100% for a guy. But I don't mind. :) I don't have any problems in not having a relationship (knowing that I haven't met the person I want to be), although I miss it sometimes.

What does my day look like? I don't think it's that interesting right now.

So I wake up, have breakfast, I wash myself, I check my emails, today I started to change my room so I can redecorate it, I've searched for a job and wrote a letter, my parents and I ate, I helped my mom doing the dishes, I went on with my room, I went outside to be with my cat, when my parents got home I listened to what they had seen in the shop, I listened to a friend who was talking about his girlfriend, I listened to another friend I didn't hear from a long time, I ate something together with my parents, I saw your email and I was excited to write back so I started writing back and reading topics on the forum and I watched a movie (memento).

I guess it was a pretty meaningless day.. :p

Ok, so I have to say that I'm not really up to date about the European Union, so I guess it doesn't affect the daily-routine in any way. :p But I guess you are right. A lot of elements of the European Union are located in Brussels.

I wrote a lot, but I guess you will have to live with that because I like to write long letters. :p I don't really do it intentionally, but once I start writing I can go on for a while. :) Some people don't really like that and stop writing and I think that's sad, but it's ok, I always find people who do appreciate the long letters. I know I wrote back really fast, but most of the time I have lots to say after I received a message from someone, so I start replying as fast as possible now that I have all of those thing in my head. But don't feel pressured to write back that fast also! :)

I wish you a good day!

Elise

## **My answer:**

Hi Elise,

that's wonderful. Thanks a lot for your letter, its very pleasant to hear again from some sincere person.

My name is Czech Sarana. As a lay person I was "Jan Stovicek", but that name I use only in official occasions, otherwise all call me "Sarana", "monk", pious devotees call me "venerable sir" etc. My brothers, uncle and aunt call me either by my lay name or as brother. I am very satisfied if people call me "monk", it is the most middle way addressing I can think of.

You thank me for a long message but it rather looks like if you want to conquer the length :-D. It's joy for me to write even twenty pages long essays if I am sure, that the recipient is interested in reading it and that it would help the recipient to understand some salient points of a certain topic.

I went to Sri Lanka to attain magical powers and wisdom. There is no other reason. If I get to know, that there is nothing like magical powers and wisdom, I go back home. In Sri Lanka the monkhood little by little perishes, but still there are many monks in every villages. In my country only once or twice a year few monks visit to preach about the BUDDHA's teaching (Dhamma) and then they go back. I follow the Theravada tradition, that is the original tradition of Buddhism. You

may have heard about Zen, Mahayana or Vajrayana, but those are later mixtures of Buddhism with the indigenous religions of the particular countries.

In Sri Lanka monks become monks because of financial or social problems apart from those few, who become monks out of understanding the great opportunity to gain enlightenment in this life. I am one of the latter group.

Yes, Zen Buddhism is fine, however, I know very little about it. I have participated in some meditation sessions with Zen Buddhist monk when I was a lay person and I have heard a lot, but I don't know much details. I think that the main problem with Zen is, that they forget the Buddha and they emphasize their present teacher. Thus the Buddha's teaching little by little perishes on behalf of gradual "development" through the teachers' tradition. But certainly, they know the way to enlightenment and I bet that there are enlightened ones among Zen Buddhists.

Yes, sitting hours is no problem, you only have to get used to it. I started with 15 minutes, then I little by little increased. Now if I want I can sit 100 minutes without any considerable movement. It is just about the habit, anybody can do it. It is one of the least difficult things on the way to enlightenment.

Yes, actually whole the monks' life is (or at least 'should be') concerned with the path to enlightenment. Monks should speak about the path, they should practice it, they should think about it. The path consists of three things - virtue, meditation and wisdom. Thus whatever the monks think, speak or do should be concerned with one or more of those three. (Of course we are not always successful in it, but at least we try.)

OK, so, with the enjoyment. This is extremely good question, so I will ask you to relax a bit and concentrate on my answer:

The life is not eternal. Life is very short. And any time you can die. You can die next year, next month, next day, next hour, even next breath you can die. We never know when we die. You don't know what were the actions done in your previous lives. What if I have killed someone in my previous life? What if I killed my mother or father in one of my previous lives? If that is the case, I may be born in the world of suffering for many thousands of years after death. The problem is that our actions, after they are done, are like seeds. Those seeds have to grow into a flower and that flower will give a fruit. That fruit will be equal to the seed - if you sow wheat, apple tree will not grow from it. If you sow apple seeds, wheat will not grow. So whatever we have done will bring us result, perfectly equal result to our actions. However, those results must "ripen". Thus various results mix and blend, they get mild or strong according to other results, and they are also connected with the action done now. There are people who cause themselves unnecessary suffering, that is not cause of past action, that is cause of their present action (obviously). Now when you understand, that you have so many actions that still didn't bear the result, you can imagine how dangerous it is to wait for next life if you don't know what it will be. These are things, that even Buddhists rarely understand.

When you understand, that you are in this danger, that means, that any time you can die and lose anything, you also understand, that whatever pleasure you enjoy here you loose just after that pleasure finishes and you have to search for another one. And that does not relate only to sex, that relates also to getting degree at university, becoming famous, having family and also being a human being. All and many other things are things causing pleasure and satisfaction. But they are impermanent and after you loose them you have to strive hard to get them again. You may not loose degree this life, but with death you loose it certainly. Thus whatever effort that is on the level of "impermanent satisfaction" is completely futile. Of course, I wanted to have sex and a lot of it, I never say no. But now I don't want it. Why? Because it is the pleasure on the impermanent level, the futile pleasure. Whatever the pleasure may be, if it is impermanent, it is useless, because it does not lead to progress. The only thing what I seek is progress, because progress is the thing that transgresses death. Sexual pleasure will never transgress death. These things are immensely important, so in case if you were not attentive now, read this paragraph again.

Thus I see, that only if I work hard on development of virtue, meditation and wisdom, then only I can gain the progress not limited by death. There are 31 worlds of beings, starting with those who suffer a lot, animals, hungry ghosts, ugly gods, humans, six worlds of gods who enjoy sensual pleasures and twenty worlds of gods who enjoy meditation pleasure. All those worlds are impermanent and thus whatever enjoyment there (apart from enlightenment) is futile and not leading to progress. Please, remember - if there is no progress, the danger of falling into the worlds of suffering is always there. Why? Because with no enlightenment there is no real control of mind. With no real control of mind there is no real virtue. With no real virtue there is no assurance that we don't kill, steal, rape etc. With no such an assurance we may kill, steal and rape. If we kill, steal and rape we are going to suffer in worlds of suffering, and that is what we, supposedly, never want.

So, in conclusion - I don't enjoy pleasures, which are impermanent and which do not transgress the death. However, there are many pleasures that transgress death, such as pleasure caused by sincere generosity, pleasure caused by pure, virtuous behavior and pleasure caused by developed meditation. Those are three kinds of pleasures which monks certainly should enjoy. Those three pleasures, indeed, transgress death.

Yes, being a monk is nothing for a year or two and the Buddha pointed out that leaving monkhood is nothing wise. However, some say, that it is better to leave monkhood than spoil it. I don't know, Buddha refused only those monks, who stole, killed people, lied about their spiritual achievements and had sex with women. I don't know about any other case when the Buddha would reject someone's monkhood. The Buddha understood the danger of life and the great luck of having opportunity to attain enlightenment here and now. That is why He, out of His compassion, established the monks' order.

I don't know whether you have read some topic that I have made in the forum? I have made several topic, I think it would be beneficial for you to read them. "My three humble questions to Muslims", "Say that Islam is peaceful, or else ... !" and some others. I think good ideas are in "Why do people oppose religions" and in "If you are fanatic don't read this" (or something like that).

Regarding the religious tolerance, there is one big problem. Whatever religion has the tendency to claim, that it is the true one, therefore it wants to spread. However, when a religion spreads, that's usually on behalf of other religions. Therefore there is nothing like religious tolerance, because all religions compete with each other for the followers and the competition is not always fair-play. If you understand well the way how Muslims spread their religion, you would either need to vomit or stop studying Islam completely (that is my present case). I severely criticise Islam in the forums because I know that my ideas are perfectly unbiased, so I don't mind to say what I really think. Moreover, I studied the way of rhetorics and how to speak with people, so I know the rules how to explain the idea clearly, sentimentously and truly as well. I am never afraid of Muslims, that is because I view them as spiritually weak people unnecessarily limited by Qur'an. They may be fantastic people, but instead they are only "good" people if not even worse than that.

Yes, I feel the meaning of the life I lead. I feel it much more than many people around me can imagine.

"So you say you don't know if you will have the chance to explore your spirituality after you're dead." This I don't understand, did I say anything like this? What is the main issue is, that I don't know what will be my next birth, so I have to use the remaining time as much as possible. And no, I am not scared of death. I had a dream that a person from mafia tried to kill me, but instead of having fear or anxiety, I wished all beings to be happy and I was ready to die without any problem. I believe that if I live a good life, if I really try hard to progress spiritually, I have a good chance to have a very, very good rebirth. That is why I am not afraid of death. However, because nothing is sure, I must work hard right now. Anyway, it is essential to say, that the conditions that I have now are actually the best I can have. I am a human. I am healthy. I am able to learn and think. I am willing to be virtuous and meditate. I have access to the Buddha's teaching and to people who understood it. I don't know what better conditions for attaining enlightenment I want. I have probably the best opportunity I

can have, so it would be complete madness if I didn't put it into practice.

Meditation is of two kinds in Buddhism - concentration and contemplation. Concentration is when you are focusing on one single object, for example happiness of all beings, breath, a color etc. Contemplation is not thinking here, it means that you just watch and see. So you watch the character of your body, of your thoughts, of phenomena that you perceive by senses and you watch your feelings. You watch them without any further work, just watching, not grasping, not changing, not thinking about. This is the way to realization.

I have some contacts with the friends, however it is interesting, that after one person goes far away the other little by little stop to contact him. My father spoke with me last last year in May. My girlfriend told me lies and behaved as uppish-minded, so I had to block her in my e-mail box. My brothers and uncle still speak with me. There is also a number of Buddhists in my country, some of them also speak with me and support me.

Yes, the food is problem for some monks, so they eat in the evening. It depends on the zeal that the monk has. I eat in the evening only when I am sick. Some don't eat in the evening even if they are sick and some monks eat only in the morning. That depends on the health-condition. Eating in the evening due to health problem is rarely supposed to be incorrect here.

Relationships? I don't understand how people can manage to live together fifty or sixty years without adultery, that is a mystery. I sincerely believe that I would not have that problem if I was married, but I know that not all other people are as "restrained" as me. I have understood a lot here when meditating and discussing about religions. Love, whether to your mother, father, teacher, God or lover - all is blind. If the love is blind, than it brings suffering, because you are suffering when the other one abandons you, when the other one leaves you or prefers someone else besides you. Thus love is suffering. Whatever we cling on will bring us suffering, remember this and watch it in your life.

There is love, which is free from clinging. That love is called loving-kindness and it is one of the things that must be practiced by all monks. Here this loving-kindness is quite different from love because it is unbiased. Loving-kindness means wishing happiness (and working for it) for all beings in the universe, not only for mother or father. The love is same for all beings, thus it is also connected with equanimity. As a monk it is my foremost duty to love all beings and behave to them as to members of my own family, even if they torture me, kill me, harm me or do whatever unpleasant. This is one of the things why Islam hates Buddhism, because Islam will never be able to get its "peace" on the Buddhist level. This is actually not the real problem that Islam has - for Islam is important the number of followers. People see, that Buddhism is more peaceful than Islam, so they reject Islam. And that is the exact thing why Islam hates Buddhism and Bahaism, because both these religions are very, very peaceful.

I know that my girlfriend will one time get old and sick and at that time I will not be able to help her. When she will die, I will also be not able to help her. And that is what makes me extremely sad. I always wanted my girlfriend to be as much happy as possible. Then I understand, that though it would be no problem for me to get sick, old and die, she may get struck with that very fiercely (because she was not Buddhist and she didn't want to listen about sickness or death, she really didn't like those topics).

My mother died when I was five, so it was only my father who reacted. He was afraid that I may disrobe soon and thus without university education the monkhood time would be lost time. Finally I persuaded him to allow me to become a monk, so there is no visible problem. Visible means, that I really didn't ever perceive, that my father would be angry or somehow extremely unhappy with my decision. From some reason he never liked to speak with me after I left my country and now it is one and a half year since he told me last words. Something went wrong, I don't know why. I hope he'll get over it.

When I told my girlfriend that I am not coming back she didn't like to accept it much. She still tried to persuade me to come back, but after few months she changed. She started to be very unpleasant, she tried to point out my mistakes that I have done when I was with her and explain how I am stupid that I have left her. She explained me how I am actually suffering here and how much I could enjoy with her. I don't know how would you, but for me, regardless the fact that it is a psychological trick, I understood that she didn't understand anything. After two years she wrote me, that she was going to marry. When I explained her the dangers that may occur after she gets married she accused me of jealousy. I didn't get angry, but I got sad. She didn't understand anything and like a blind, mad person she goes towards something she knows nothing about. I don't say that marriage is bad, it is very good, but all the people should not go to it only with positive expectations. And we know, how the positive expectations very often finish - by divorce. However, whenever I spoke about the Buddhist teachings, she asked me to change the topic. All other topics were fine.

Regarding your story, I think that all it is just about our attitude. I think that my lay life was quite normal. But I compare it with my expectations. Yes, when I was five, my mother died, the other five years I was roaming from school to school, altogether four schools I visited, almost every year different school. Then I studied at Catholic High School, where I caused a lot of trouble to teachers. When I was 15 I wrote two books and when I was 18 I tried to observe monks' virtue, that is not eating in the evening, not watching amusing movies, listening to music etc. When other students had to go to cinema, I apologized to the teacher telling him, that I was observing Buddhist rules, that is the way how I avoided cinema watching at one time. Until my fifteen I didn't mind to tell harsh words to my father or even fight with him. After fifteen I changed myself, my life changed upside down and in one month or two I changed from a very bad boy into an extremely virtuous person. People could not believe it and my grandmother thought that I was following some religious cult. Yes, it sounds like incredible, but to me it is absolutely normal, I don't see anything strange there. I see all the causes that led to what I did, so I am quite calm when saying it. And as a proof, that it was "normal life" in my eyes is, that I wanted more, I wanted to be even more and more special. I left my country, became a Buddhist monk and now I am indeed extraordinary. That is my nature. I strive hard to be extraordinary. When I am not successful in it, that is my suffering. When I am successful, that is my happiness. However, I aim at gaining wisdom. Maybe if I get it, my desire to be extraordinary will vanish :-).

Regarding your relationship, you should find some boyfriend, you should have relationship, that is the way of lay people and there is no problem in it. There are troubles in relationship but there are very good things there as well, such as having someone to make you happy when you are sad, someone to share with you his likes and dislikes, someone to protect you, someone to understand you, someone to cause you that bodily and mental pleasure by soft touching the body and telling nice words. Apart from this, there is the mutual joy, that both you can have, there is the sincere love and zeal to make the other person happy. I assure you, that the relationship that I had with my girlfriend was the greatest lesson in love I ever had. I really learned what it is love. And when one can understand how one should love one person, then one can easily understand how to love all beings without any difference. I owe my girlfriend a lot for such an extremely important lesson.

Meaningless day? Do you ever have meaningless days? That is very interesting. But, though it may make you unhappy, I should tell you one thing - it is always we, who make our days meaningful or meaningless. For me any day when I manage to do a generous act is meaningful. Any day, when I manage to live virtuously is meaningful. Any day, when I manage to meditate is meaningful. This is the way how I make my days meaningful :-). And be sure, that I would never allow anyone to make my days meaningless :-D .

Fine, you see, something we have in common. We both like writing long messages. I hope that this message was beneficial for you in some way :-). If you have any questions, don't hesitate to ask.

Anyway, I like my freedom to reply any time I like. It happens that I purposely don't reply for sometime because I don't have time. Examination at University is near and I have a lot of other work, because I help other students to pass (I am always asked by other students to help them, because I know more English, so I can explain them easily the things from lectures. They learn English, but they are from Burma, Cambodia, Bangladesh etc. I learn in Sinhalese, but I am from Czech. So we all have to strive hard to pass :-). ) OK, I am looking forward to hearing from you,

may you be happy,  
may you be well,  
may you live long,  
may we all be always satisfied! :-)

Monk Sarana

## *God or no God*

### **I (phantomthewhite) wrote:**

There are various forum topics regarding the existence of God, so I decided to share also the Buddhist point of view. This is not Mahayana, Tibet or Vajrayana Buddhism. They have slightly different understanding. This is explanation of the Theravada Buddhism, the Buddhism of Burma, Thailand, Sri Lanka, Cambodia and Laos. The Buddhist view is the third part of this article, the explanation of the "two extremes" is solely mine. Feel free to comment and criticize.

(some more information is in the forum-topic "Calling for Errors in Buddhism")

There are two extremes -

- a) There is a God, who created us and who can punish and reward us
- b) There is no God and no afterlife

- a) There is a God, who created us and who can punish and reward us

The problem with God who would have created the world is connected with His attributes. Let's assume, that he is "all good". I believe, that hatred, anger, covetousness, deceit, killing and stealing are not "good". Regarding the fact, that these things are in the world, much probably the God either is not "all good", or he didn't create the world or he doesn't exist.

Another problem is, that he is unrighteous. There are people, who have have been a doctor, helping other people, they were generous and truthful, but because they didn't believe in God or didn't observe Sabbath or whatever other "minor offense", they will be condemned to hell. But there are people, who have committed murders, thefts etc. and those people will go to the same hell like that doctor. Thus you can see, it is not right, there is no justice if the God puts two bad people who have been bad "on a different scale" to the same hell.

In some Christian sects there is belief in "purgatory", that means that the bad people are in hell until their sins are "payed off". But again, there are people, who do little good or who "just don't do bad things" and there are people, who spend whole their lives by generosity, helping others, causing peace and friendship among others. Both these types go to the same heaven. I don't call that justice.

Another problem is, that God is going to put his "bad children" to hell forever. I can't imagine any parent burning his child for five minutes or even hour. Then how could I ever imagine the God, the "all good", burning his children not years, not thousands of years, but forever. That is quite strange and illogical to me. He would have to be "infinitely masochistic psychopath" so that He could let his children to suffer infinitely. This is not written in anger, this is just the way I understand it. I feel no anger or hatred now. (After telling this argument many Muslims start to argue, that the one who told this argument must have a lot of hatred in him, but 1. Their reaction is not a counterargument 2. It is not true, for example I have no hatred or anger in me when writing these lines).

b) There is no God and no afterlife

Atheism is "hopeless". I am really sorry, but for me Atheism is much worse way than any theism. Atheists believe, that they have only one life. What a fear they must have so that they don't die. What a fear they must have, that they become unsuccessful in this life. They must be full of fear, I think, because having just one life in this world full of danger, ah, that is something what I wouldn't like to experience. I always thought that there is some God, I didn't believe that He would help me, but I believed that somewhere beyond there is some other being, more powerful than me and maybe I can get in contact with Him either this life or after death.

Atheism has this problem with injustice also - there are various people and they all have different successes, different possibilities, different life-spans etc. And all they have just one life. I call this injustice and I don't want to accept this as truth.

Now see my argument - ok, let's say, that there is no life after death. Therefore, if you don't believe in God it is not a problem, and if you believe in God or next life, it is no problem either. But. But if there is a next life, if there is a God, it is better to believe this life in the God and if there is the God then you have no problem and if there is no life after death you have no problem either. Suppose that you believe, that there is no God or after-life and you would be wrong - then you can prepare yourself for punishment. I believe, that if you think that there is nothing after death or if you are not sure, it is always better to believe, that there is something after life and thus you are safe - in any case you will not have a big problem.

The other problem is with morality. The problem is, that if you have only one life, you don't have any real reason to live morally. You can actually do whatever you do, because there is no other punishment than that of the law. I believe that it would be extremely dangerous if people were atheists. Now you can see, even those who follow some religion do bad things. Now if you assume that they don't follow any religion whatsoever, they would have to be extremely bad, I think.

"The Middle Path"

OK, this is the proposed idea, the idea given by the Buddha. I feel quite confident as to the correct transcription of the Theravada Buddhist ideas here, but if you find discrepancies, I will attempt to correct them.

The Buddha explained, that all what happens to us is actually the righteous consequence of our previously done actions. So, for example, if you killed, you have a short life. If you were stealing, you are poor. If you didn't kill, you have a long life, if you didn't steal, you are wealthy. If you drank alcohol, you are mentally sick, if you didn't drink alcohol, you are smart. If

you helped others, now others help you, if you spoke truth, now people believe you and like to listen to you etc. etc. You can see various people in the world and that they are doing various actions. The Buddha explained, that the law of action-consequence applies to all those beings and the variety of people is a good proof for it. You can see people, who live short time, people who live long time, people who are happy, people who suffer, those who are poor, those who are rich etc. etc. All that is cause of their actions. All their actions that they do right now will bear them also consequences, and those can be either in this life or in the next life. Some people do good things but they suffer - yes, they suffer because they have done something bad in the past, but because they are doing good things, they don't need to be afraid of reward in the future. The reward comes always in a different time, one cannot say, that reward for action will come tomorrow or after a year, or after ten years or next life. That all depends on other actions and other things that are connected with it. But one thing is 100% sure to me - the system that the Buddha explained, is righteous.

The Buddha has explained, that there are 31 kinds of beings, or 31 worlds -

- 1] the world of great pain and suffering
- 2] the world of animals
- 3] the world of ghosts
- 4] the world of ugly but quite powerful beings
- 5] the world of people
- 6-11] worlds of sensual pleasure
- 12-27) worlds of pleasure caused by deep meditation done in a previous life
- 28-31) worlds of immense pleasure caused by very, very deep meditation done in a previous life

This system of 31 worlds make the "world's righteousness" very clear - the beings not only that they experience poverty, richness, suffering and pleasure according to their actions, but they are also born in various worlds or "planes" according to their actions. Thus many people who behave in a bad way may be reborn either in the world of great suffering, as animals or as suffering people. People, who are very generous and live ethically may either reborn as gods enjoying sensual pleasures or as very successful people. But one is sure - no being lives eternally. No being lives eternally. Some beings may have an immeasurable life-span, but all they will finally die and reborn somewhere else according to the actions they have done in the past. Therefore, though there is a God conception in Buddhism, the God is just a being, that has done a lot of, immeasurable merits in his past lives and thus he was reborn as the God.

Now the problem with God - the Buddha has taught, that in the 14th plane, that is one of the worlds of pleasure caused by deep meditation done in a previous life, is the plane where the Hinduist God (that is very similar God to the one in Christianity, Judaism and Islam) lives. If you read Brahmajala Sutta (check it by Google), you will get to know, that after destruction of the world, a new world comes to existence, particularly the 14th plane. The world comes to existence as the reward for actions of the God of the 14th plane, who previously lived in the 15th plane and after death there he was born in this 14th plane. The God is born there and enjoys a lot of pleasure, but he is alone. As he is alone and enjoys the pleasure for billions and billions of years, he thinks - "what about if there were other beings?" And at that moment other beings appear. Then he things - "ah, the beings appeared just after I thought about their appearance." But those beings appeared there just as the result of their actions done in their previous lives, not as a result of the wish of the God. However, God doesn't know that and he thinks, that he is the creator of those beings. Little by little more and more beings start to appear in that world and lower worlds start to appear, again as the consequence of actions done in previous lives of the beings that appear in those worlds. And the God still thinks - yes, I am the creator, I am the father of all and those all beings have to worship me. Then he comes to various ascetics and various people and explains them - I am the God, who has created you. You should worship me.

Thus you can see, that even the Buddha accepted, that there is a God who thinks, that he has created the world. But the

Buddha doesn't accept, that the God would be correct in his assumptions. The Buddha has shown, that God, though he thinks he has created the world and lives eternally, actually didn't create the world and will die, though it will be after very, very long time (which the God himself can't imagine).

This what I have written here should help you to think, whether people are inherently good or bad. I believe, that everyone chooses his path himself. When we are born we know nothing and only the mother can help us to get to know something. Our father and mother help us to understand the world and then the society where we live helps us to form our ideas. But in the same society good and bad people both can appear. The Buddha has taught, and I believe it, that everyone has a choice to follow the path of good or bad. However, the Buddha has shown the consequences of each of these decisions. The Buddha has also explained, that it doesn't matter what you believe, you can be a Christian, a Hinduist, you can worship whatever God or gods you want, but if you are generous, if you don't kill, don't steal, if you tell truth and help others, you may reborn in heaven or as a successful man. This is another reason why I follow Buddhism, because it is not dogmatic.

I expect critique on the ideas given above, so, feel free to comment. I believe that the "truth" can be found before death and that it can be found out logically, without any connection to God or special spiritual ability. However, it is not easy. :)

PS: A year ago I have read the book "Intelligent Design" by Claude Vorilhon. I suggest anyone to read it and think about the things there. Not that it would agree with Buddhism, I think about half of the book is contrary to what the Buddha has said, but definitely it can give a lot of light to this problem and it can inspire anyone. What is astonishing, that a lot of people (even here in some forums) explain and propose ideas like if they have read the book, though they don't mention the book's name or the "society" connected with the book or even its author. You can download the book here:  
<http://www.rael.org/request.php?1>

## **Reply from joneswk:**

phantomthewhite wrote:

b) There is no God and no afterlife

Atheism is "hopeless". I am really sorry, but for me Atheism is much worse way than any theism. Atheists believe, that they have only one life. What a fear they must have so that they don't die. What a fear they must have, that they become unsuccessful in this life. They must be full of fear, I think, because having just one life in this world full of danger, ah, that is something what I wouldn't like to experience. I always thought that there is some God, I didn't believe that He would help me, but I believed that somewhere beyond there is some other being, more powerful than me and maybe I can get in contact with Him either this life or after death.

Yes, atheism can lead to some very bleak views regarding life, the universe, and everything; but your assumption that atheists must be full of fear is wrong. There is absolutely nothing that demands that being an atheist entails fearing; and this lack of fear goes back more than two thousand years - Epicureanism is an atheistic school of philosophy which denies anything to fear in death. Stoicism was a borderline atheistic school of philosophy and also denied any reasons for being afraid. Members of both schools of philosophy even proved the act by committing suicide with a calm disposition.

And personally, I'm finding the idea that I have a single life without any inherent purpose or worth isn't all that bad. Yes, I will die and that will be that - But upon death there is nothing left: I will not exist in any way, shape, or form. That there is a

body which people associate with me is an error on their part. It's not really a big deal to me. The purpose I have in life is the purpose I give it - My satisfaction with my life comes down then to living in a manner that is of value to me and reconciling that with my memories of the past. And even if I don't achieve everything I want, well with death comes oblivion and that it will be of no more consequence to me seems quite fine.

phantomthewhite wrote:

Atheism has this problem with injustice also - there are various people and they all have different successes, different possibilities, different life-spans etc. And all they have just one life. I call this injustice and I don't want to accept this as truth.

The desirability of the truthfulness of something is not a truth condition, i.e., truth doesn't care what we want - what's true is true regardless. Justice and injustice are fictions we make up to pigeon-hole the world into something that we want to live in. The varieties of successes, failures, and everything else is merely life - the justice or injustice of it is mere interpretation and there's nothing real there.

phantomthewhite wrote:

Now see my argument - ok, let's say, that there is no life after death. Therefore, if you don't believe in God it is not a problem, and if you believe in God or next life, it is no problem either. But. But if there is a next life, if there is a God, it is better to believe in the God and if there is the God then you have no problem and if there is no life after death you have no problem either. Suppose that you believe, that there is no God or after-life and you would be wrong - then you can prepare yourself for punishment. I believe, that if you think that there is nothing after death or if you are not sure, it is always better to believe, that there is something after life and thus you are safe - in any case you will not have a big problem.

Pascal's wager still doesn't work - Let's suppose I do believe in God. Which take on God should I believe in? Should I believe in the one where if I do not also believe in His son as my Lord and Savior then I will suffer eternal damnation? But this one take on God has enough different interpretations that I could still wind up choosing wrong. So my safety is far from assured.

phantomthewhite wrote:

The other problem is with morality. The problem is, that if you have only one life, you don't have any real reason to live morally. You can actually do whatever you do, because there is no other punishment than that of the law. I believe that it would be extremely dangerous if people were atheists. Now you can see, even those who follow some religion do bad things. Now if you assume that they don't follow any religion whatsoever, they would have to be extremely bad, I think.

Except the West has a fairly long history of atheistic philosophers dating back to beyond Thomas Hobbes, and even devout Catholic thinkers such as the sainted Thomas Aquinas posited a (limited) origin of morality in social needs. Hobbes put it rather colorfully and bluntly - that without society human life would be "solitary, nasty, brutish, and short". Morality then stems not from fear of some divinity or coming back in another life as something wretched but rather from a real and present need to get along with each other well enough to permit our individual survival.

And again, your assumption that atheism entails extremely bad behavior seems to be entirely unfounded, unless you want to

start making tautologies of the sort "to be an atheist is to be full of fear and exceptionally bad."

## My reply to joneswk:

ok, thank you very much for your reply, joneswk

a)

Quote:

but your assumption that atheists must be full of fear is wrong

You are correct. Some atheists are not so much afraid of death. But if I were an atheist, I would be. Terribly. I remember a fantastic discussion on ABC ( [http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=05Kp\\_JCEsto](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=05Kp_JCEsto) ) where Richard Dawkins answered a question whether he believes in next life. He said something like - oh, it would be boring after some 500 years. (Excuse me if I was not exact in the quotation.) Yes, but actually true is that the longer one would live the more one would experience. I think that if we could live ten years only, he would say - oh, it would be boring after fifty years ... You see, it doesn't make much sense, he himself is (I think) now 69 years old (oh, an old sage? :D .. :)). The idea that spiritual development is absolutely useless, that establishing myself in some perfected ethics - such an idea is terrible. Heh, as a monk I have to observe some hundred rules, not that I would enjoy it, but I myself feel that the precepts help me to keep myself free from many difficulties. When I meditate I feel that I get a spiritual development and the fact that I would lose it at death is terrible, terrible, terrible :)). Anyway, if there is no life after death, why would old people learn and study new things? It would be a lost time.

Atheism is indeed an idea probably most historically been in India at the time of Vedas. In the Buddha's time there were six very famous philosophers. A few of them believed in no existence of God or gods, in results of actions etc. It is interesting to study the philosophy of these philosophers - check

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ajita\\_Kesakambali](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ajita_Kesakambali)

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pakudha\\_Kaccayana](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pakudha_Kaccayana)

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Purana\\_Kassapa](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Purana_Kassapa)

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sanjaya\\_Belatthaputta](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sanjaya_Belatthaputta) (agnosticism)

I believe that any kind of belief, that actions bear results is ENOUGH. If you believe, that all your actions will bear you results, regardless whether it is due to kamma (karma) or God or whatever else, it is absolutely great. Atheist believes, that his actions will bear only result in this life, so not all actions can bear result and many actions would be without result even though they could bear it, if such actions were done secretly. This is a serious danger of atheism and I believe that many religious people don't believe that all their actions will bear result or even that their bad actions may be completely forgiven - in that case the society is in a serious danger and it always was. Christian religion has this flaw, because Christians can misinterpret Bible (as they have done it billion times already) and do bad actions believing that God would forgive it.

There is another problem with non-belief in afterlife - that is "selfishness". The Western people are quite intelligent and already brought up by Christianity and taught not to be selfish, moreover having abundance of things they don't have a reason to be selfish, they have what they need (ok, maybe not all Westerners, I speak about me, I am originally also Westerner). Now when the "era of atheism" is here the people, though following the kind livelihood, truth and helpfulness

and compassion that they have learned throughout centuries from Bible, they stop to believe in the God and "judgment", that is no problem as the "good behavior" is already "under their skin". However, there are many people who don't have any such "good tradition". I live in Asia few years and the state of "livelihood" is terrible, horrible, awful. The people if they lost their religion they would kill and steal, and many do so here. The religion is essential for those, who are not enough developed to live without religion. I believe, and I stress this: I believe, that even blind belief is good for a person, who cannot behave well without it.

The problem with atheism is with the selfishness, as I have mentioned before: if this is your last life, you must enjoy as much as possible. You must get as much as possible. You, you, you. It is only about you, it is your last life. And if we connect to it the fact, that ANY DAY, ANY HOUR YOU CAN DIE, then I don't know how crazy one would become. Or, actually, how crazy I would become. I would die next day during an accident when hunting money and pleasure :D. Is this the last life? If it is true, let me live in false, I don't want to finish in a mental hospital.

b) Atheism is unjust - yes, you are correct, truth doesn't care what we want. However, I try to find the truth not only by reason, but also by intuition: I believe that as my intuition says - giving is good, killing is not good - similarly my intuition says - the life is just and all actions will bear result. But this is not based on what I have read. It is based on what I really feel. There are people, who feel, that the God loves them, ok. I feel, that all actions bear result. You feel, that after death there is nothing. Here we have the problem with "belief". Almost all good religious discussions I ever attended, finished with the conclusion, that I believe this, other one believes that and that's it.

(Just to mention - with a Muslim converter, it finished that I believe in Nibbana possible to be attained in this life, he believes that it is not possible to attain it. I cannot prove it, he cannot disprove it. However, I decided to prove it to myself by becoming a monk, following strict ethics and meditation. I am heading to see what is the truth. :))

There is a question: If there is nothing after life, if you believe that, then

- 1) is there any use of spiritual development?
- 2) Is there any use of studying and meditating in old age?
- 3) Is there any use of humbleness?

c) Pascal's wager - yes, I read the counterarguments just yesterday after making this forum-topic. They are beautifully arranged in Wikipedia: [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pascal%27s\\_wager](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pascal%27s_wager) .

But what I really meant, what is really important for me is the "Pascal's wager" in the Kalama Sutta ( <http://www.accesstoinight.org/tipitaka/an/an03/an03.065.than.html> ) which refers to afterlife and importance of giving and doing good things. Regarding afterlife, I see only "yes" or "no" options, therefore Pascal's wager fits to it well.

d) Morality in social needs? Who cares? I think you should meet some more people before you claim "social needs" etc., because there is actually nothing like that. There are people who are ready to blow up the Earth just for fun. The morality is not intrinsic, not at all. There are so many people who love, who love to kill and steal. I think you really should meet more people, just get a friend who was in a jail and you get to know something about "the world". Some people are intrinsically WONDERFUL and deserve worshipping every day. Some people are not worth a spit. You can't say, that all people are good or that morality is intrinsic, I can't believe that you haven't ever met people who love to steal and kill.

The religion is a great help to those people, who love to do bad things, as it casts fear upon them and forces them to behave well in the society. In this case the religion has done a marvelous work throughout the history. Yes, there were many wars in history due to religions, but I believe that without religion there would be even more wars. Just see WW1 and WW2 which were not based on any religious thought. And these two wars were quite big in compare to the others in the history...

OK, religion is a great help to those, who cannot live ethically and those, who live ethically can or don't need to follow religion, but: Suppose you are a great king and your subjects are killing each other, they steal etc.. Suppose you are a good king and believe, that killing and stealing is not good. How would you stop the people? What would you do? If I were a king in such a situation, I would definitely make a group of priests, I would appoint some clever and wise person to write a fake "word of God" and ask him to spread it among the people. I would ask him to make the God of the new scripture so powerful, that the people would be afraid of him and out of the fear they would do what is written in the "word of God" or the "religious scripture". I would ask the author of the book to include there all necessary rules so that the people would avoid killing and stealing and that the kingdom would be peaceful, the people would help each other, they would be generous, humble, truthful and kind.

Would you be angry with me as such a king? Would you be angry even if I would be able to settle most of the country and decrease the killing and stealing to minimum? Would you be angry with me in such a case if the people would become generous, humble, truthful and kind to each other? You may be. But I would be proud.

Here is an important fact - you see, there were religious scriptures and let's assume, that they were somewhat the "fake word of God" (this idea can be supported by the book from Claude Vorilhon "Intelligent Design" - <http://www.rael.org/request.php?1> ). Finally, by the time, the people would anyway find out, that the scripture was fake, but anyway they would already know, that the good behavior is better than bad behavior, they would thus maintain their kindness, love, generosity, truthfulness etc. as it would be already their tradition. But that tradition would not rise up without that scripture, is that clear? :) Therefore I say, that letting the people to believe blindly for the sake of peace is good. Do you like peace? I do.

PS: Not that I would ever try to be a king or to think to become so, but Buddhist scriptures are full of explanations on how king should behave and rule the country if he wants to be successful. My idea with "fake God's word" is not mentioned there. . However, supporting own subjects (people), following good behavior and generosity are emphasized there. According to the Buddha, ethics of people is restored gradually (either due to positive change in king's own behavior or due to a group of people who decide to change their behavior), that is first by giving up killing, then by giving up stealing, then by chaste life, by truthfulness etc. up to very peaceful and kind behavior of all people. After the mankind attains the best level of livelihood, one time it happens that king stops to be generous, the people start gradually steal, then lie, then kill etc. and it goes down until the people are bad. This way the "level of behavior" is subjected to wave-like change, going from bad to good, from good to bad, from bad to good, etc. See Cakkavatti Sihanada Sutta: <http://www.basicbuddhism.org/index.cfm?GPID=29> .

## **Reply from Ricemonster:**

First and foremost, you assume too much of others. These thoughts on what you feel being atheist 'must be' is through your personal feelings. It's exactly like saying: if a person is on welfare, he "must be" lazy because I believe it to be so.

phantomthewhite wrote:

The problem with atheism is with the selfishness, as I have mentioned before: if this is your last life, you must enjoy as much as possible. You must get as much as possible. You, you, you. It is only about you, it is your last life. And if we

connect to it the fact, that ANY DAY, ANY HOUR YOU CAN DIE, then I don't know how crazy one would become. Or, actually, how crazy I would become. I would die next day during an accident when hunting money and pleasure :D. Is this the last life? If it is true, let me live in false, I don't want to finish in a mental hospital.

Secondly, EVERYONE is selfish. If you are aware of what you want, reacting to that desire is a selfish choice, even if it benefits others.

You assume that being atheist is all about "me, me and me". Did you forget that there is a social aspect to people? Did you forget there are connections between individuals? People meet and maintain relationships. To maintain a connection, it's about a compromise between at least two people. Whether that compromise is conscious or not, it is there. Through that compromise, people form relationships, communities, societies, etc. To maintain those societies, people react either to the law of that society and/or react to their own principles and emotions.

Eg: I want to do this and that for my child, so she can grow up happy and healthy. I will work and take care of her and watch her grow up. In return, I feel good that a certain legacy is passed on. Seeing her smile, laugh, fall in love and possibly have kids of hers one day makes me feel warm and fuzzy inside. When I die, I know I have left behind someone that I helped brought up and she will at the very least remember me.

It's really not that difficult to understand.

## **My reply to ricemonster:**

That's quite obvious that one will love his dear ones. But what about enemies? If a person who doesn't believe that his/her actions will bear him appropriate results and is encountered with a very difficult person causing him/her troubles, he/she has no reason not to kill that person or make troubles to him/her as a revenge. One who doesn't believe that actions bear appropriate results doesn't have any reason to think, that revenge is wrong.

Do you think that revenge is wrong? Why? I am afraid that without a religious concept it is quite difficult to explain why revenge is not wise.

Non-belief in action-result is not a problem in case of happiness and satisfaction. But if suffering and problems come, not believing in action-result may lead to massacres.

## **If you are fanatic don't read this**

### **I (phantomthewhite) wrote:**

How can you follow a religion based upon a book full of mistakes?

just for example:

<http://www.1000mistakes.com/>  
<http://www.answering-islam.org/quran/contra/>  
<http://www.chick.com/information/religions/islam/errors2.asp>  
<http://www.understanding-islam.com/rq/q-070.htm>  
<http://www.thespiritofislam.com/text/Q10.html>  
<http://www.apostatesofislam.com/>  
<http://answers.yahoo.com/question/index?qid=20100802224513AABtA4v>

Please, if you really want to get to know something about "real Islam", check these beautiful comics pictures connected with exact quotations from Qur'an and Hadith:

<http://www.faithfreedom.org/comics/01.htm>

Finally, someone here said that in every religion there are extremist. Tell me about any Buddhist extremist.

Take it easy! Nobody actually knows the truth before the enlightenment! :)

### **ChrisShiva wrote:**

Phantom if you were a sincere Buddhist you would be more concerned with your own spiritual development rather than always trying to point out the errors in other religions.

I have always had a generally positive perception of Buddhism and it's wise ideas about human nature. But you sir are proving that even Buddhism has it's share of hypocrites and phonies. Rolling Eyes

### **Faisal replies:**

Hi phantom...

If you know what you are talking about and if you are confident about what you post, then I want you please to choose the STRONGEST claimed ERROR/MISTAKE in the Noble Quran and post it here. If we can refute the STRONGEST claimed mistake with sensible answer then all weaker claimed mistakes would be automatically false allegations and no need then to waste time in answering them.

I would like to bring to your knowledge that Allah (God) challenges the skeptics/disbelievers to produce even one error or contradiction in the Quran:

"Do they not then consider the Quran carefully? Had it been from other than Allah (God), they would surely have found therein many a contradiction." [The Noble Quran 4:82]

So, again I want you please to choose the STRONGEST claimed ERROR/MISTAKE in the Noble Quran and post it here to examine your allegation.

Thank you.

## **My reply to Faisal:**

Quote:

Phantom if you were a sincere Buddhist you would be more concerned with your own spiritual development rather than always trying to point out the errors in other religions.

I have always had a generally positive perception of Buddhism and it's wise ideas about human nature. But you sir are proving that even Buddhism has it's share of hypocrites and phonies. Rolling Eyes

I don't think that challenging other faiths is a problem. I believe, that it is correct to tell one's own opinion, if it is free from insults, lies or deception. As such, I don't consider my previous post to be wrong in any way. Moreover, I invite anyone to question Buddhism, as I myself question it as well. I decided to dedicate my life to find the truth and I don't mind whether the truth is Buddhism, Islam, Bahai or Shintoism or anything else. I want to find it. When I am sure, that something is not the truth I like to share it with others, because I may be wrong :). Consequently, the others, understanding that the thing which I suppose to be wrong is actually not wrong can explain that it is so. If I don't share my ideas, how can I get to know the truth???

Quote:

Hi phantom...

If you know what you are talking about and if you are confident about what you post, then I want you please to choose the STRONGEST claimed ERROR/MISTAKE in the Noble Quran and post it here. If we can refute the STRONGEST claimed mistake with sensible answer then all weaker claimed mistakes would be automatically false allegations and no need then to waste time in answering them.

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So, again I want you please to choose the STRONGEST claimed ERROR/MISTAKE in the Noble Quran and post it here to examine your allegation.

Your claim doesn't seem to be correct to me. You said "if we can refute the STRONGEST claimed mistake with sensible answer then all weaker claimed mistakes would be automatically false allegations and no need then to waste time in answering them." It's not true. Just see, I'll give a simple example with mathematic equation:

$$1 + 2 + 3(3 + 5) = x$$

now there is a solution with few smaller mistakes and one "strongest" mistake:

$$1 + 2 + 3(3 + 5) = 3 + 3(3 + 5) = 7 \cdot (3 + 5) = 21 + 5 = 26$$

$$x = 26$$

Now you see, there is this "strongest" (or most fatal) mistake (supposedly) wrongly given by me is:

$$1 + 2 \text{ is not } 3 \text{ but something different. Eg. } 4$$

Then there are other mistakes, which in addition to the first make the result completely different from the correct one:

$$3 + 3 \text{ is not } 7 \text{ but } 6$$

$$7(3 + 5) \text{ is not } 21 + 5, \text{ we have to count the bracket contents and then multiply, so it is actually } 7 \cdot 8$$

$$\text{however, it is not } 7(3 + 5), \text{ but } 6(3 + 5), \text{ therefore it will be } 6 \cdot 8$$

The result therefore is not 26, but 48 (I didn't see math for a long time, so I hope I am correct :D )

You said, that if we can refute the most serious mistake, refuting the other mistakes is irrelevant. OK, so, we will refute my counter-argument, that  $1 + 2$  is not three, as it is three. If what you said is correct, then refuting the other mistakes is irrelevant. Therefore  $3 + 3$  is 7 and that's it. Is that what you meant? I hope not. Therefore, either you are going to answer all the questions little by little, or give it up and don't answer me :). If you answer me, it will be very beneficial for me, as I learn some things. And it may be beneficial either to you, as you clarify some things to yourself when dealing with my questions. Finally, if I see that Islam is better than Buddhism I will try my best to be as best Muslim as possible.

Here are some mistakes in Qur'an from three sources, one by one:

(A) <http://www.thespiritofislam.com/text/Q10.html>

Quote:

When you read the Qur'Unsaved Document 1an, you will see that the Quran listed one of the sons of Noah to be drowned in the flood, and his wife to be sent to hell. What? This will make the whole thing confusing, because humanity begun by Shem, Ham, and Japheth. If one of them drowned, we cannot go to the origin of the mankind. But the Quran says that one of the sons of Noah, his father said it him, "Come to the ark! Come!" He said, "No. I will go to the highest mountain. I will not be drowned." But he was drowned. Then it says that the wife of Noah betrayed him, and she went to hell. When we go to the book of Genesis, we see that Noah, his wife, his three sons, his three daughters-in-law entered in the ark. When we come to the New Testament, Peter said, eight went to the ark. eight by number."

(B) <http://www.understanding-islam.com/rq/q-070.htm>

(1) The Qur'an claims that all believers were commanded to offer animal sacrifices:

Quote:

“To every people did We Appoint rites (of sacrifice), that they might celebrate the name of God over The sustenance He gave them from the animals (fit for food). But your God is One God: Submit then your wills to Him (In Islam): and give thou the good news to those who humble themselves” S. 22:34

There is only one problem, namely that Christians have never been commanded to offer sacrifices. Jesus is the Christian's only perfect and final sacrifice, having been delivered up for our sins once, never to be repeated.

## (2) Queen of Sheba and Sun Worship

Quote:

The Qur'an claims that the Queen of Sheba and her people were sun worshipers:

“But he was not long in coming, and he said: I have found out (a thing) that thou apprehendest not, and I come unto thee from Sheba with sure tidings. Lo! I found a woman ruling over them, and she hath been given (abundance) of all things, and hers is a mighty throne. I found her and her people worshipping the sun instead of Allah; and Satan maketh their works faireseeming unto them, and debarreth them from the way (of Truth), so that they go not aright...” S. 27:22-24

Yet, archaeology has proven this to be incorrect since moon worship was prevalent in this particular region:

“A measure of Muhammad's limited knowledge of the ancient traditions of the Arab deities is gained from the fact that the Qur'an states that the Queen of Sheba was converted to the true god from the sun-worship of her people (Pritchard 1974 14), while all the evidence at Marib suggests that the Moon God, the very source of the crescent of Islam, was always the predominant deity.” (The Lunar Passion and the Daughters of Allah:  
<http://www.scitec.auckland.ac.nz/~king/Preprints/book/orsin/orsin3.html>

(C) <http://www.chick.com/information/religions/islam/errors2.asp>

Quote:

One of the questions which puzzled the ancient Arabs was, "Where did the sun go when night time came?" The Qur'an gave them Allah's answer.

He [i.e. Zul-qarnain] followed, until he reached the setting of the sun. He found it set in a spring of murky water.

(Surah XVIII ( Kahf) vs. 85-86)

We agree with Muslim scholars that Zul-qarnain refers to Alexander the Great (see Yusuf Ali's appendix on this subject in his translation of the Qur'an). According to this surah, Alexander the Great traveled west until he found out what happened to the sun. It went down into and under the murky waters of a pond. When it was completely covered by the water, darkness fell upon the earth.

To the early Muslims, this surah gave the divine answer as to why darkness fell when the sun set in the West. They assumed that the sun, like the moon, was the size perceived by the human eye, about the size of a basketball. Darkness came when with a mighty hissing roar it went down under the dark waters of a pond. They boldly and proudly proclaimed that this marvelous answer proved that the Qur'an was indeed the Word of God.

Today, modern Muslims are quite embarrassed by this passage and try to ignore it or to quickly dismiss it as poetry. But the passage is not part of a poem. Thus it cannot be dismissed as figurative language or poetic license. In the context, it is part of a historical narrative which relates several historical incidences in the life of Alexander the Great.

The mistake was based on the erroneous assumption that the earth was flat. The authors of the Qur'an did not know that the earth was a sphere which revolved around the sun.

I am ready to become a Muslim even today. But if I become a Muslim, I am going to question it further even as a Muslim, like I question Buddhism now, when I am a Buddhist monk. I have a lot of unanswered questions regarding Semitic religions, and as such I fall into believe, that there is no answer for them, but that they are just wrong. Buddha Himself explained some 60 religions and philosophical believes that were present during His life and He explained, that all they were wrong. The Buddha never hesitated to say, that a religion or philosophy was wrong if He saw it appropriate.

Right now I am in Sri Lanka, here is freedom of speech. I don't know how it is in your country, but here the freedom of speech is. That is why I am not ashamed to say what I really think. The Buddha has explained, that five kinds of speech are not good: telling lies, slandering, telling harsh words, angry criticizing and idle chatter. I sincerely believe, that peaceful questioning religions is neither of the five.

Another comment is, that the Buddha Himself approached various people from various religions etc. and peacefully spoke with them about their beliefs and peacefully converted them to Buddhism. There is no problem in peaceful questioning religion in Buddhism. There is no rule for monks or for lays that would say that you must not peacefully question religions.

This kind of discussion is extremely beneficial for both sides, that is me and you. I believe that person who doesn't like peaceful questioning religion is indeed one of hypocrites and phonies as I was (slightly indirectly) named that way by ChrisShiva.

### **henery8th reacts on my post:**

yes i see a budhist extremist it's you. if you are not extremist you just interested in your believe but your nature does its work unfortunately

yes as you said no body knows the truth before enlightenment now you enlighten the truth about your nature pal

sorry i'm not so kind with you because i said the reality and the truth and as they said ( the truth is bitter)

### **karaoke wrote:**

I am aware that there are some Muslims who are dishonest, unreliable, who cheat, etc. but the media projects this as though only Muslims are involved in such activities. There are black sheep in every community. I know Muslims who are alcoholics and who can drink most of the non-Muslims under the table.

In spite of all the black sheep in the Muslim community, Muslims taken on the whole, yet form the best community in the world. We are the biggest community of teetotalers as a whole, i.e. those who don't imbibe alcohol. Collectively, we are a community which gives the maximum charity in the world. There is not a single person in the world who can even show a

candle to the Muslims where modesty is concerned; where sobriety is concerned; where human values and ethics are concerned.

### **Norse04 wrote:**

Muslim countries don't even come close when it comes to being the most generous.

<http://diplopundit.blogspot.com/2010/08/why-are-richest-muslim-countries.html>

Modesty? All those rich oil skeikhs and sultans who benefit from Westerners coming to their county and pumping up that oil for them, and the Western architects who built their skyscrapers and hotels, are certainly not the models of modesty.

Human values and ethics? You mean, like stoning rape victims, pushing homosexuals off of cliffs, killing those who leave Islam, claiming that a woman's testimony is only worth 1/3 of that of a man, in court, fearing free speech, or glorifying prophet Mohammed who had sex with a 9 year-old girl?

### **ChrisShiva reacts on what I wrote:**

Phantom,

Your judgemental reponses show you may claim to be a Buddhist but you really have no idea what your religion is all about.

It says on your profile that you used to be a Muslim. I find that interesting because, while you now claim to be a Buddhist, you still have that same narrow minded mentality where you believe your religion is the only right one and that all others are wrong. A true Buddhist would never think that way.

### **karaoke wrote:**

A question

have u ever heard or saw a Muslim whether he's a pious or not turned into a christian or Jew ??? but we learn a lot of non-Muslims daily embrace Islam and among them your Priests and so on...

### **Norse04 replied:**

Plenty of Muslims want to leave Islam, but fear being killed.

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=09WjFwe8pUk&p=52665355BD7BC50C&playnext=1&index=93>

<http://www.faithfreedom.org/forum/viewtopic.php?t=26125>

## **II\_Faisal\_II reacts on what I wrote:**

Hi phantom ...

Well .. let us not try to play with words and numbers unless you want to divert the discussion to something irrelevant as it is a waste of time and space.

You missed my point when I offered you the easiest opportunity to prove that the Quran is not really from God by just asking you to present to us ONLY ONE MISTAKE/ERROR (ONLY ONE..no more is needed) and that will be enough to debunk Islam and show that it is a false religion. Allah (God) in the verse I already posted to you gives you the chance to disprove the Quran with the minimum effort and that is to produce ONE error/contradiction (or mistake) in the Quran.

If you are sincere and you search for the truth as you claim then that will be fair for you. Let it be understood that I will not let you drag me into the request to answer 100 false allegations which have already been answered many years ago. Because I don't have the time nor the space to do that here. And if you insist to have all the answers to those allegations and claimed mistakes, then I'll provide you with the websites that contain all the answers in details!

However, because you have already chosen three claimed mistakes, I will answer those three claims only and I hope that my answers will force you in the future to search the truth about any allegation yourself from the authentic Islamic sources instead of blindly believing those anti-Islam websites.

Next, I will start answering your three claimed mistakes one by one, by the will of Allah.

## **II\_Faisal\_II answers explains the first problem in Qur'an:**

Answer:

(First) Rationally, you have no right to be trying the Quran by the Bible because you are a Buddhist (unless you believe in the Divinity of the Bible !!!). If you believe that the Bible is a credible book then you shouldn't be a Buddhist !

(Second) How can a sensible person who claims to follow scientific and logical approach examine the credibility of a book (The Quran) by comparing it with a NON-CREDIBLE corrupted book (The Bible) !!!? This is not a scientific approach but a stupid approach. The Bible, even according to its own theologians, is a corrupted book. It is not the Original Holy and Pure Word of GOD Almighty. It is a rewrite and a personal interpretation of those unknown men who wrote its "books" and "gospels". This is clearly stated by the bible's own theologians.

Even the Bible itself admits:

"How can you say, "We [the Jews] are wise, for we have the law of the LORD," when actually the lying pen of the scribes

has handled it falsely?' (From the NIV Bible, Jeremiah 8: 8 ) "

"How can you say, 'We are wise, and the law of the LORD is with us'? But, behold, the false pen of the scribes has made it into a lie. (From the RSV Bible, Jeremiah 8: 8 )"

In either translation, we clearly see that the Jews had so much corrupted the Bible with their man-made cultural laws, that they had turned the Bible into a lie!

Here is an example of corruption from the Bible:

In [Genesis 6:3] "And the Lord said, My spirit will not be in man for ever, for he is only flesh; so the days of his life will be a hundred and twenty years".

Now, after this there are examples of people living longer than 120 years:

[Genesis 25:7] "These are all the years of Abraham's life that he lived, one hundred and seventy-five years."

[Genesis 9:29] "So all the days of Noah were nine hundred and fifty years, and he died."

So, How can the bible be a Divine book when it states God said no one would live longer than 120 years and then people did so!!?

Here is another example of corruption in the Bible:

Biblical scholars are nearly all agreed that the Story of the Adulteress of John 7:53-8:11 is a later addition to the Gospel (a latter insertion). It is absent from the original Greek manuscripts (that means it was FABRICATED).

See the proofs by your own eyes here

<http://www.bible-researcher.com/adult.html>

<http://www.bible-researcher.com/comma.html>

<http://www.bible-researcher.com/papyrus66.html>

This adds to the long list of evidences about the fabrications in the corrupted bible.

If you are not convinced yet then watch this documentary:

Who wrote the Bible! By Dr. Robert Beckford

<http://video.google.com/videoplay?docid=7785317849743909385>

Who Wrote the Bible? Is the Bible the Word of God? Why is the Bible full of Contradictions?

(First shown on Channel 4 in December 2004)

A documentary done and presented By Dr. Robert Beckford who himself is a christian and has a Ph.D. degree in Theology. This Channel 4 documentary explores questions at the heart of the great Christian faith in a fair open-minded fashion. It is NOT meant to be inflammatory but informative. The truth one will see is the Bible is NOT what it is thought to be. So what is the Bible? Find out!

The answer to the second false allegation will be next, by the will of Allah.

## **II\_Faisal\_II further explains the first problem:**

Answer:

Again, I wonder if you are really a Buddhist or a Christian! because if you believe that the Bible is Divine (true) then you must not calim to be a Buddhist !

(First) The Old Testament is rife with animal sacrifice, sanctioned and willed by the old testament God. They also occur in the New Testament. For example Joseph and Mary (the natural mother and father in law of Jesus (peace be upon him)) sacrifice "a pair of doves or 2 young pigeons" [Luke 2:21-24]

[Luke 2:21-24]

21 And when eight days were accomplished for the circumcising of the child, his name was called JESUS, which was so named of the angel before he was conceived in the womb.

22 And when the days of her purification according to the law of Moses were accomplished, they brought him to Jerusalem, to present him to the Lord;

23 (As it is written in the law of the LORD, Every male that openeth the womb shall be called holy to the Lord )

24 And to offer a sacrifice according to that which is said in the law of the Lord, A pair of turtledoves, or two young pigeons.

(Second) Jesus (peace be upon him) explicitly stated in the Bible that he never came to abolish the laws of the Old Testament. He said:

"Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law (the Old Testament) or the Prophets; I have not come to abolish them but to fulfill them. I tell you the truth, until heaven and earth disappear, not the smallest letter, not the least stroke or a pen, will by any means disappear from the Law (the Old Testament) until everything is accomplished. (Matthew 5:17-18 ) "

(Third) The Christians of today who claim that Prophet Jesus peace be upon him (whether he was GOD himself or a Messenger of GOD) died on the cross for their sins are not practicing the Christianity that Islam recognizes as the true religion of Allah Almighty. The Jews and the Muslims of today do offer lamb sacrifices for Allah Almighty in their religious celebrations to feed the poor. The Christians that are recognized by Islam (who don't believe in Jesus died on the

cross) should make the same sacrifices. (I refer you to my previous answer to your first false allegation where I mentioned that the Bible has been corrupted). Jesus (peace be upon him) has never said in the Bible that he came to be sacrificed on the cross for our sins nor did he mention even once in the Bible the original sin.

The Quran does not accept that Jesus (peace be upon him) was crucified, but states that he was saved and taken directly to heaven.

## **justwannachat wrote:**

[quote="karaoke"] u never hear and u won't hear a person embrace an other religion.....u are bribing people by giving them money homes in order to embrace ur religions, /quote]

What a lot of male cow dung!!!!!!

Faith is a personal thing and to parade "converts" around as trophies is totally disgusting.

You think no-one leaves your religion?

To embrace another?

Or none?

Here, I'll lend you a screwdriver to tighten that loose screw buddy.

What they paying .... promising you?

One virgin and a banana for each person you convert?

How dare you say "bribing people by giving them money homes in order to embrace ur religions"!!!!!!!!!!

Listen buddy, I have sat back and listened to your dribble with hardly a comment, knowing full well that sooner or later you would either tire, be called back into your classroom, or trip over your own tongue.

But I never thought you would be so stupidly rude and ignorant.

If you want to play "My God is better than your God" then you had better begin sharpening your sword mate.

Start with these.

Have you experienced God.... personally I mean?

Have you ever seen a miracle? ..... performed one?

Have you ever communicated with God? ..... and got a reply?

I await your replies ..... without dribble ..... without showing me more u-tube propaganda.

## **MikeUS wrote:**

can any muslim explain to me these verses from the quran? :)

"Qur'an 9:29-Fight against Christians and Jews until they pay the tribute readily, being brought low.

Qur'an 4:91- If the unbelievers do not offer you peace, kill them wherever you find them. Against such you are given clear warrant.

Qur'an 2:191-2-Kill disbelievers wherever you find them. If they attack you, then kill them. Such is the reward of disbelievers.

Qur'an (2:65-66) Christians and Jews must believe what Allah has revealed to Muhammad or Allah will disfigure their faces or turn them into apes, as he did the Sabbath-breakers."

## **henery8th replies to MikeUS:**

it's strange you are a native speaker and you don't know what do they mean ( i'm not a native speaker)

the first

allah talked about the christians and jews that they are live under islam rules ( this tribute is a kind of fidelity or a kind of respect's witness. ( as someone under ur country rule's ( as in irak or in afghanistan)( because they pay the tax of liberation from tyranny as they said)

the second

i think it's clear he said IF...( why you answered me because you think i attacked you ( maybe i don't offer you ideas's peace) yes) why some pals don't attacked me because they think that i don't attack them

the third

this is ALLAH's will. ( and no one could ask him why do you do that or don't you that) if you have partenaria with allah please go to him and cancel this agreement or if he owes you with something please recover it.( in 19th (1845) when your country's government wanted to expanse from the east to the west they killed the indians under god's will ( manifest destiny) you know it) right?.

now i think you have ideas about these verses pal.

## **MikeUS replies to henery8th:**

First thing, don't call me pal Wink

I can assure you many Christians and Jews didn't want Islam in their lands...and still don't pal Wink So fight and kill them until they readily pay tribute? Hmmm not peaceful at all...

So IF non believers do not offer you peace (meaning they want you off their lands) you will kill them? Just like the Native Americans fought against the colonies, many Chrisitans and Jews resisted the word of islam by sword.

Allah never said to kill, you muslims did that pal. Christians and Jews are allowed to question their religion and here you won't even question the killing?! Crazy!

## **MikeUS continues replying:**

Oh and after looking at your video link on youtube (which because it's on youtube it MUST be credible), if Jesus was mentioned so many times in the quran and alot of the quran is from Christian and Jewish beliefs...why one earth would "Qur'an 9:29-Fight against Christians and Jews until they pay the tribute readily, being brought low" be in the quran? And the prophet they were talking about in the Old Testament was the coming of Jesus NOT mohammed. Mohammed did a great way at twisting that to what he wants. Now I am not here to discuss Christianity with you or try to convert or say it's better. But YOU bring up these videos and I am simply disagreeing with you, my intent is to ask you about your religion. I don't understand how if the quran mentions Jesus more than mohammed, why are verses like the ones I gave you even in the quran? It seems like Islam went in the complete opposite direction. Jesus preaching to His people to love and forgive and mohammed saying fight against Christians and Jews?

## **I (phantomthewhite) react:**

First I would like to share my happiness with you all, who contribute and watch this discussion. Though the "peacefulness" of the discussions sometimes seems to deteriorate, sometimes I feel that a truth is achievable. I sincerely believe that peaceful discussion about religions has extremely beneficial consequences, such as increase of logical thinking, increase of knowledge, clarification of one's belief and ideas and self-control.

From ChrisShiva:

Quote:

Phantom,

Your judgemental reponses show you may claim to be a Buddhist but you really have no idea what your religion is all about.

It says on your profile that you used to be a Muslim. I find that interesting because, while you now claim to be a Buddhist, you still have that same narrow minded mentality where you believe your religion is the only right one and that all others are wrong. A true Buddhist would never think that way.

You may say, that I don't know what Buddhism is about only if you base it on something what I have said or not said in reference to what the Buddhism teaches. As you haven't done it, I ignore what you have said and let you keep it for yourself.

I am afraid that you have read some other profile. Anyone here could see and can see that I haven't written anything about Islam or being a Muslim in my profile (though I have some "notes" about Islam). (If you think that I have just now edited it check the date of the last edition). I have never been a Muslim and I have never had a possibility to become a Muslim in Czech Republic (my native country) as there Islam is mostly understood as a religion of wars, masochism and jingoism. This is the view of people there, not mine. I remember when me and my friends met a Kuwait Muslim studying medicine at

one of the universities in my city - when I wanted to speak with him about Buddhism my friends asked me not to do so as they were afraid that he would kill us. (However, that Kuwait Muslim was very friendly, very good person, I sincerely liked him.) My father says, that Islam is not a religion referring to encouraging the violence in Qur'an, which he had read and studied. (My father was never a Muslim.) Those are not my views, I believe that Islam is a good religion for some people, definitely better than atheism (if the Qur'an is understood in the peaceful way ... ).

You don't know who is true Buddhist unless you have read the Tipitaka. I have read quite a good part of it and it is a person, who follows eightfold path, who may be called "a true Buddhist", but such a term is never seen in Tipitaka. The Buddha didn't even appreciate laity as much as the monk's life, because according to him monk's life is the best way to enlightenment. Belief, that Buddhism is the only right religion is nothing what a follower of eightfold path (the path to enlightenment) is prohibited to do. If you don't accept this claim, tell me about any sutta, where it is different. I offer you Brahmajala Sutta where atheism, monotheism, materialism and various other views are refused as wrong. Moreover, I am really embarrassed when you tell things like "true Buddhist" because I thought that you are a wise man and know, that words like "true Christian", "true Muslim" and "true Buddhist" are like if you say "true horse", "true bull" or "true frog". I don't know which horse, bull or frog is true for you, for me all frogs are just frogs, all bulls are just bulls and all horses are just horses (though there may be some more obedient, clever or skillful ones and some less obedient, clever or skillful).

From II\_Faisal\_II:

Quote:

Hi phantom ...

Well .. let us not try to play with words and numbers unless you want to divert the discussion to something irrelevant as it is a waste of time and space.

You missed my point when I offered you the easiest opportunity to prove that the Quran is not really from God by just asking you to present to us ONLY ONE MISTAKE/ERROR (ONLY ONE..no more is needed) and that will be enough to debunk Islam and show that it is a false religion. Allah (God) in the verse I already posted to you gives you the chance to disprove the Quran with the minimum effort and that is to produce ONE error/contradiction (or mistake) in the Quran.

I believe that I explained well, that it was just an example and that I reacted to your comment in the most direct way possible for me. Moreover, I am used to use similes as they proved to me to be an excellent way to explain my ideas.

Through refusing my example you didn't understand why I didn't agree with your premise that if you refute the most serious mistake the other mistakes are not needed to be refuted. Whenever I use a simile, it has a purpose, the purpose is clarification of my claim. Next time please accept the gift of example from me, or we may get stuck on misunderstandings.

From II\_Faisal\_II:

Quote:

If you are sincere and you search for the truth as you claim then that will be fair for you. Let it be understood that I will not let you drag me into the request to answer 100 false allegations which have already been answered many years ago. Because I don't have the time nor the space to do that here. And if you insist to have all the answers to those allegations and claimed mistakes, then I'll provide you with the websites that contain all the answers in details!

Thank you very much for your kind cooperation. I like Islam (until it claims to be and acts as a religion of peace) and as such I am happy when I can get my questions answered. I have a great number of questions regarding Islam and I am not the only one of that kind. One of the main questions I would like to ask more is, why Allah puts all peaceful unbelievers to hell and murdering believers to heaven. I was not able to get a satisfactory answer up to now. I would like to ask for forgiveness in case if peaceful unbelievers and non-worshippers of Allah are also going to heaven. (However, Qur'an doesn't seem to substantiate such a claim.)

From II\_Faisal\_II:

Quote:

The Bible, even according to its own theologians, is a corrupted book. It is not the Original Holy and Pure Word of GOD Almighty.

Some theologians claim the same thing about Qur'an. Moreover, as I have heard from one theologian, a Jewish Rabbi, the Qur'an may be supposed to be a word of Satan. However, I don't agree with that.

From II\_Faisal\_II:

Quote:

Again, I wonder if you are really a Buddhist or a Christian! because if you believe that the Bible is Divine (true) then you must not calim to be a Buddhist !

I never said that I think that Bible is Divine or anything even similar to that. Many Buddhists may claim it (Buddhist sects are in such a variety, that in some countries they take even controversial forms), so in that case you have been incorrect for the second time. However, I believe that for things that are not substantiated by historical records or facts, we may revert to the "less credible" sources. Though there are non-explained errors in Bible, there are also things, that agree with the historical records and facts (and I suppose Qur'an to be same in this regard). Regarding the Biblical claims that are not accompanied with any historical records and facts, we probably may only discuss, think and believe them or refuse them. I wanted to know your explanation of the differences between these two "less credible" sources, as Qur'an is often supposed to be as historically correct as Bible.

From karaoke:

Quote:

In the following pages, the meritorious achievements of the Spanish Muslims will be briefly discussed in the fields of astronomy, agriculture, botany, medicine and surgery. It was, in fact, the achievements of the Muslims and their transmission to Europe through Spain which became responsible for the renaissance of western Europe.

You have mentioned also some scientific facts mentioned in Qur'an. I don't reject, that Qur'an was dictated by Allah, as the Buddha never refused existence of God who supposes Himself to be the Creator of the Universe. However, the Buddha explained, that the God is not worth worship, as the God is deluded and wrongly thinks, that He created the world. Please, for reference read Brahmajala Sutta (easily googlable).

However, from the books that I have recently read it rather seems, that your God is actually the main representative of

extraterrestrial beings (which would explain the not-yet-explained mistakes in Bible and Qur'an both). The books "Intelligent Design" from Claude Vorilhon and "Behold a Pale Horse" from William Cooper mutually agree on things related to it, though they were completely different authors, in different countries, different societies and different time.

Very strange thing is, that Claude Vorilhon's new religion (Raelian Movement / MADECH) is so similar (many of it's teachings related to our planet) to Bahá'u'lláh's new religion (Bahá'í Faith - but they believe that God is God, not an alien). Both were again completely different people. I don't say, that I believe it, but I say, that for now it seems to be most substantiated claim I have come across. Read the two books, the book from C. Vorilhon and the book from W. Cooper before you comment this. I hesitated whether it would be of some use to start a new forum topic inspired by that, but I am afraid that too many people would misunderstand.

I am afraid that religion doesn't have an impact on scientific development. You can see so many Christians who actually "forgot" or rather "disregarded" teachings of Bible and helped the scientific development. I sincerely believe, that the religion that really has an influence on "education" and "development" is Baha'i faith, which just in 2007 was the second most quickly spreading religion in the world (just after Islam) and Raelian Movement. Please, go to Wikipedia and read something about it. Here are some mentions of "Muslim's not-so-peaceful reactions" towards Bahá'ís, copied from [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bah%C3%A1%27%C3%AD\\_Faith](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bah%C3%A1%27%C3%AD_Faith) :

Quote:

Bahá'ís continue to be persecuted in Islamic countries, as Islamic leaders do not recognize the Bahá'í Faith as an independent religion, but rather as apostasy from Islam. The most severe persecutions have occurred in Iran, where over 200 Bahá'ís were executed between 1978 and 1998, and in Egypt. The rights of Bahá'ís have been restricted to greater or lesser extents in numerous other countries, including Afghanistan, Algeria, Indonesia, Iraq, Morocco, and several countries in sub-Saharan Africa.

Iran

The marginalization of the Iranian Bahá'ís by current governments is rooted in historical efforts by Shi`a clergy to persecute the religious minority. When the Báb started attracting a large following, the clergy hoped to stop the movement from spreading by stating that its followers were enemies of God. These clerical directives led to mob attacks and public executions. Starting in the twentieth century, in addition to repression that impacted individual Bahá'ís, centrally directed campaigns that targeted the entire Bahá'í community and institutions were initiated. In one case in Yazd in 1903 more than 100 Bahá'ís were killed. Bahá'í schools, such as the Tarbiyat boys' and girls' schools in Tehran, were closed in the 1930s and 40s, Bahá'í marriages were not recognized and Bahá'í texts were censored.

...

Since the Islamic Revolution of 1979 Iranian Bahá'ís have regularly had their homes ransacked or been banned from attending university or holding government jobs, and several hundred have received prison sentences for their religious beliefs, most recently for participating in study circles. Bahá'í cemeteries have been desecrated and property seized and occasionally demolished, including the House of Mírzá Buzurg, Bahá'u'lláh's father. The House of the Báb in Shiraz, one of three sites to which Bahá'ís perform pilgrimage, has been destroyed twice.

I sincerely state and claim, that Baha'i is even more peaceful religion than Buddhism as unlike Buddhism it says, that all religions are to be supposed as a unity and it strives for unity of religions and humanity. Buddhism doesn't claim anything like that and Buddha himself explained that many religious and non-religious views (such as nihilism) lead to rebirth either in worlds of suffering or to rebirth as an animal. Moreover, the Buddha explained, that associating bad friends is bad and

that associating the good people is the real blessing. This claim is rarely known outside Asia, because Buddhist missionaries were afraid that it could make Buddhism less attractive. I believe that truth is what we should search for, not followers, that is the reason why I "shamelessly" publish this fact here. Regarding the fact, that I follow Buddhism by mind and body, one may be sure that I know why I do so.

## **From karaoke:**

Quote:

i didn't say that they are ur actors or else, i said those r ur idols as well as ur role model.....so how come they converted to islam ????

I would like to mention here, that many singers convert to certain faiths just with the purpose to become famous. Just recently I have read at <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Satanism> :

Quote:

Black metal music has often been connected with Satanism, in part to the lyrical content of several bands and their frequent use of imagery often tied to left hand path beliefs (such as the inverted pentagram). More often than not, such musicians say they do not believe in legitimate Satanic ideology and often profess to being atheists, agnostics, or religious skeptics. In some instances, followers of right hand path religions use "Satanic" references for entertainment purposes and shock value.

This was a little bit unpleasant, so now from my side: The former Sri Lankan president Bandaranayake (I hope spelling is correct) converted (from Christianity) to Buddhism after she was elected to the president post. It is more than probable, that it was just with the expectation of more success. She was rarely accepted by the Buddhist monks as a sincere Buddhist. (I have lived in Sri Lanka for few years, that is why I know it.)

## **From justwannachat:**

Quote:

If you want to play "My God is better than your God" then you had better begin sharpening your sword mate.

I am afraid that whether you use big letter or small letters, whether you use stronger speech or kind speech, it is same. Throughout the time I speak with Muslims I have always encountered very peaceful Muslims, who never got influenced by way of my speech or by what I said. Maybe I was a fortunate one, but I indeed think, that if they want to understand what you say, they will understand it. You can express yourself as if without emotions. I believe that many Muslims who are opened for discussions are very kind people and very tolerant, but again, it maybe because I was fortunate to meet only that kind. Anyway, one think I like on Forums is, that one cannot hurt me or murder me when replying.

## **From MikeUS:**

Quote:

Qur'an 2:191-2-Kill disbelievers wherever you find them. If they attack you, then kill them. Such is the reward of disbelievers.

## **From henery8th**

Quote:

this is ALLAh's will. ( and no one could ask him why do you do that or don't you that) if you have partenaria with allah please go to him and cancel this agreement or if he owes you with something please recover it.( in 19the (1845) when your country's government wanted to expanse from the east to the west they killed the indians under god's will ( manifest distiny) you know it) right?.

now i think you have ideas about these verses pal.

henery8th , I hope that you don't believe that killing disbelievers is Allah's will. It was really scaring.

## **justwannachat reacts on what I wrote him:**

Mate, it wasn't even addressed to you..... or at Muslims in general.

"I have always encountered very peaceful Muslims" ..... so too have I met many peaceful and wonderful Muslims, and they have never make statements like I have heard here in this topic. Like "bribing people by giving them money homes in order to embrace ur religions", or boasting about the number of converts.

No, it is not a case of "if they want to understand what you say, they will understand it.". believing in a God is about experiencing God. I can assure you that many people understand what God/Allah is about but do not believe because they have never experienced a relationship with God/Allah.

My questions still remain unanswered.

Have you experienced God.... personally I mean?

Have you ever seen a miracle? ..... performed one?

Have you ever communicated with God? ..... and got a reply?

I await your replies ..... without dribble ..... without showing me more u-tube propaganda.

## **henery8th replies on what I told him:**

henery8th , I hope that you don't believe that killing disbelievers is Allah's will. It was really scaring.[/quote]

first of all islam is coming to spread peace not for killing humanbeings and that doesn't mean there's no kill in islam but with conditions

and i'm not abusif in using verses of allah for my interests ( i don't use it as a cover)

i'm not killer or responsible of killing disbelievers and i'm against killing the innocent humans

our prophet killed just one in his life with his sword even though he could kill more than one pal. so he's a prophet of peace. when he opened mekka what he said to disbelievers when they asked him what do you do with us he said ( u can go u r free).

### **MikeUS reacts on what I told to henery8th:**

first of all islam is coming to spread peace not for killing humanbeings and that doesn't mean there's no kill in islam but with conditions

and i'm not abusif in using verses of allah for my interests ( i don't use it as a cover)

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henery8th...again no legitimate answers and honestly you really are ignorant about your prophet mohammed, how do i know that! you said he killed one person in his life?! that is a COMPLETE LIE! what kind of prophet even kills ONE person!? sorry my friend you are following your religion blindly and are against you own religion because your prophet killed alot...and you say you are against killing? sorry you need to learn more about mohammed...

### **henery8th reacts:**

of course i'm against killing. if you know my self better than me this is another case . yes i follow my religion blindly

how many persons that mohammed had killed may you show me mohammed life's history ( i think u fed up of learning till vomiting which does to you an encephalopathy that makes you hallucinating and sometimes to be delirious). haldol ( medication ) works good in this cases don't forgot to add parkinan( medication too) to inhibe the extrapyramidal effects of haldol. ( this counsultation is free for you).

### **MikeUS reacts:**

of course i'm against killing. if you know my self better than me this is another case . yes i follow my religion blindly

how many persons that mohammed had killed may you show me mohammed life's history ( i think u fed up of learning till vomiting which does to you an encephalopathy that makes you hallucinating and sometimes to be delirious). haldol ( medication ) works good in this cases don't forgot to add parkinan( medication too) to inhibe the extrapyramidal effects of haldol. ( this counsultation is free for you).[/quote]

Why is it when you get caught on the lies you and many other Muslims go right to insulting? It is really fascinating to me. Logic tells me you know nothing of your religion then. You really make my day. You listen to Islamic scholars who are only gaining to hate others. Good day pal.

### **ChrisShiva reacts on what I told him:**

Phantom,

Once again you demonstrate that you are not a true Buddhist. This time you say that even Islam is better than atheism. But yet Buddhism itself is an atheistic philosophy, one that does not believe in God as do the major monotheistic religions of Islam, Christianity and Judaism.

I'm an atheist who also has a great respect for authentic Buddhism. But I find it rather pathetic that you are devoting your life to this religion when it's obvious you do not understand even its most basic ideas.

## **II\_Faisal\_II gives explanation of the second problem in Qur'an:**

Answer:

(First) Did you try even once to click on this link you posted to back up your false unsupported claim? ... or -as usual- you blindly copy and paste from any anti-Islam website without even try to examine the allegation yourself and study it !!!?

For your information, the link you blindly copied and pasted does NOT work!

(Second) It is surprising that the above mentioned article in your post, which is claimed to represent "archaeology" does not even provide any reference(s) as to where exactly the evidence from Marib suggests that the Moon god "was always the predominant deity" during the time of the Queen of Sheba.!!!!

Where are the credible scientific sources for your false allegation!!!!? ... NONE. (They fooled you)

Anyhow, I will provide you with a detailed scientific paper to refute your false unsupported claim. In this paper, we will examine the type of worship practised in the Kingdom of Sheba utilising archaeological and literary sources. The research paper is backed up by 52 references. The archaeological evidence shows that Ilmaqah, the patron deity of the people of Sheba in Marib, was indeed a Sun god.

Here is the scientific paper <http://www.islamic-awareness.org/Quran/Contrad/External/sheba.html>

## **My reaction:**

I believe that this post, is going to be very controversial, though many claims here are backed up by discourses given by the Buddha. I will dare to claim, that Buddhism is actually non-devotional polytheism, that the Buddha refused other teachings than His one and that nihilism and refusal of existence of gods is leading to hell or animal rebirth according to Buddhism. I backed up many of the strong claims by references. However, if you are not satisfied and want more, ask for it.

To justwannachat

Please, can you give a norm for the extent of the quotations so that we know consequences of our actions? Anyway, thanks for warning.

From ChrisShiva

Quote:

Phantom,

Once again you demonstrate that you are not a true Buddhist.

I have explained already, that I don't accept your term "true Buddhist" as it is an empty term. What does it mean "true Buddhist" for you? What are the characteristics of a "true Buddhist" in your opinion? And, please, can you back up your claims with some suttas (= discourses) given by the Buddha Himself?

Anyway, if you really want to speak about who is "true Buddhist", we can discuss it, it is an important topic. However, the Buddha never used term "true Buddhist", He simply explained how a person should behave if he/she wants to attain this or that; who is a good friend and who is a good recluse/bhikkhu/Brahmin. Here are some examples:

(a) (The Dhammapada, English version from ven. Narada Thera, page 5 and 6 / verse 20)

Quote:

"Though little he recites the Sacred Texts,  
but acts in accordance with the Teaching,  
and forsaking lust, hatred, and ignorance,  
truly knowing, with mind totally freed,  
clinging for naught here and hereafter,  
he shares the blessings of a recluse."

(b) Saṃyutta Nikāya (excerpt), I typed this translation from A New Translation of the Saṃyutta Nikāya by Bhikkhu Bodhi. "Bhikkhu" means Buddhist monk.

Quote:

"When this was said, great king, I told the bhikkhu Ānanda: 'Not so, Ānanda! Not so, Ānanda! This is the entire holy life, Ānanda, that is, good friendship, good companionship, good comradeship. When a bhikkhu has a good friend, a good companion, a good comrade, it is to be expected that he will develop and cultivate the noble Eightfold Path. And how, Ānanda, does a bhikkhu who has a good friend, a good companion, a good comrade, develop and cultivate the Noble Eightfold Path? Here, Ānanda, a bhikkhu develops right view, which is based upon seclusion, dispassion and cessation, maturing in release. He develops right intention ... right speech ... right action ... right livelihood ... right effort ... right mindfulness ... right concentration, which is based upon seclusion, dispassion, and cessation, maturing in release. It is in this way, Ānanda, that a bhikkhu who has a good friend, a good companion, a good comrade, develops and cultivates the Noble Eightfold Path.

"By the following method too, Ānanda, it may be understood how the entire holy life is good friendship, good companionship, good comradeship: by relying upon me as a good friend, Ānanda, beings subject to birth are freed from birth; beings subject to illness are freed from illness; beings subject to death are freed from death; beings subject to sorrow, lamentation, pain, displeasure, and despair are freed from sorrow, lamentation, pain, displeasure and despair. By this method, Ānanda, it may be understood how the entire holy life is good friendship, good companionship, good comradeship.'

“Therefore, great king, you should train yourself thus: 'I will be one who has good friends, good companions, good comrades.' It is in such a way that you should train yourself.

This was also a proof for you, ChrisShiva, that the Buddha taught that following His teaching is the correct path and that one should associate with those, who follow the Buddha's path. Now you are probably going to say, that the Buddha was not a true Buddhist... But please, back up your claims with references. Thank you.

From ChrisShiva:

Quote:

This time you say that even Islam is better than atheism. But yet Buddhism itself is an atheistic philosophy, one that does not believe in God as do the major monotheistic religions of Islam, Christianity and Judaism.

Here is a definition of "atheist" from <http://www.thefreedictionary.com/atheist>:

Quote:

a·the·ist (th-st) n. One who disbelieves or denies the existence of God or gods.

I dare to say that in more than three fourths of parts of Tipitaka (there are 84 000 parts) are mentioned some gods or a god, either with their names, or in another way. I can give you thousands of them, but I will mention five most known (which probably every educated Sinhalese Buddhist knows about) - 1. Ratana Sutta, 2. Mangala Sutta, 3. Atanatiya Sutta, 4. Dhajagga Paritta and 5. Brahmajala Sutta (all are googlable). These suttas are of the most famous suttas in the Buddhist world and I really don't understand why you claim Buddhism to be atheist and tell me that I know nothing about Buddhism if you don't have basic knowledge of its teaching. However, one thing must be again mentioned - the Buddha never encouraged anyone to worship any of gods, moreover, as far as I know Buddhist teachings, worshiping gods or God is virtually useless. That is why I claim, that Buddhism is non-devotional polytheism as it accepts existence of many gods but it doesn't encourage devotion to them.

According to suttas Islam would be definitely better, as it is only partially wrong view. The Buddha explained some main wrong views (miccha ditthi), which lead either to hell (Niraya Loka) or to rebirth as an animal (Tiraccha Loka). Among those wrong views are nihilism (ucchedavada), not believing in existence of spontaneously reborn beings (=gods/devas), belief that giving is wrong, not accepting Nibbana as attainable, not accepting the Buddhahood of Buddha, not accepting killing as bad in any occasion, not accepting stealing as wrong in any occasion etc. Those views will lead that particular person either to niraya or rebirth in animal world. (Some Muslims who have "wrongly understood Qur'an" after their killings are definitely going to be reborn in niraya after their death, referring to what suttas say). From the suttas that I have studied it seems, that monotheism (ekadevavada) is not as fatal as atheism (adevavada). The Buddha taught, that people, not believing in rebirth and existence of devas, would be born either in niraya or as animals. Fantastic example for this is Kalama Sutta (easily googlable). If you don't believe in rebirth, you are going to be reborn as an animal or in niraya, according to what the Buddha said. Similarly, if you don't believe in existence of devas you are also going to suffer consequences, according to what the Buddha taught. Remember, I back up my arguments with Kalama Sutta, so I hope that if you argue you will back up your arguments as well. Today I want to show, that monotheism and atheism as well are just wrong views (miccha ditthi), according to the Buddha.

I would like to quote also the part, where the Buddha explains the wrong views, this is an excerpt showing the parts where the Buddha actually explains, that all monotheistic religions along with atheism are simply miccha ditthi. In the first half of it you can see proof, that the Buddha accepted existence of devas as something obvious and the existence of God (Pajapati), who supposes himself to be the Creator as well.

Here I will give a short quotation from the Brahmajala Sutta which is connected with the monotheism and atheism. I believe that it is very important for understanding the attitude of Buddha towards the other views:

monotheism:

Quote:

“There are, monks, some ascetics and Brahmins who are speculators about the past, having fixed views about the past, and who put forward various speculative theories about the past, in eighteen different ways.

...

“But the time comes, sooner or later after a long period, when this world begins to expand. In this expanding world an empty palace of Brahma appears. And then one being, from exhaustion of his life-span or of his merits, falls from the Abhassara world and arises in the empty Brahma-palace. And there he dwells ... and he stays like that for a very long time.”

“Then in this being who has been alone for so long there arises unrest, discontent and worry, and he thinks: ‘Oh, if only some other beings would come here!’ And other beings, from exhaustion of their life-span or of their merits, fall from the Abhassara world and arise in the Brahma palace as companions for this being. And there they dwell, mind-made, ... and they stay like that for a very long time.”

“And then, monks, that being who first arose there thinks: ‘I am Brahma, ... Creator ... . These beings were created by me. How so? Because I first had this thought: ‘Oh, if only some other beings would come here!’ That was my wish, and then these beings came into this existence!’ But those beings who arose subsequently think: ‘This, friends, is Brahma ... Creator ... . How so? We have seen that he was here first, and that we arose after him.’

“And this being that arose first is longer-lived, more beautiful and more powerful than they are. And it may happen that some being falls from that realm and arises in this world. Having arisen in this world, he goes forth from the household life into homelessness. Having gone forth, he by means of effort, exertion, application, earnestness and right attention attains to such a degree of mental concentration that he thereby recalls his last existence, but recalls none before that. And he thinks: ‘That Brahma, ... he made us, and he is permanent, stable, eternal, not subject to change, the same for ever and ever. But we who were created by that Brahma, we are impermanent, unstable, short-lived, fated to fall away, and we have come to this world.’ This is the first case where-by some ascetics and Brahmins are partly Eternalists and partly Non-Eternalists.”

atheism:

Quote:

“Here a certain ascetic or Brahmin declares and holds the view: ‘Since this self is material, composed of the four great elements, the product of mother and father, at the breaking up of the body is annihilated and perishes, and does not exist after death. This is the way in which this self is annihilated.’ That is how some proclaim the annihilation, destruction and non-existence of beings.” Another says to him : ‘Sir, there is such a self as you say. I don't deny it. But that self is not wholly annihilated. For there is another self, divine, material, belonging to the sense-sphere, fed on real food. You don't know it or see it, but I do. It is this self that at the breaking-up of the body perishes ...’

...

“These are the sixty-two ways in which those ascetics and Brahmins who are speculators about the past, the future, or both, put forward views about these. There is no other way. “

...

“These, monks, are those other matters, profound, hard to see, hard to understand, peaceful, excellent, beyond mere thought, subtle, to be experienced by the wise, which the Tathagata, having realised them by his own super-knowledge, proclaims, and about which those who would truthfully praise the Tathagata would rightly speak.”

“Thus, monks, when those ascetics and Brahmins who are Eternalists proclaim the eternity of the self and the world in four ways, that is merely the feeling of those who do not know and see, the worry and vacillation of those immersed in craving.”

...

“Whatever ascetics and Brahmins who are speculators about the past or the future or both, having fixed views on the matter and put forth speculative views about it, these are all trapped in the net with its sixty-two divisions, and wherever they emerge and try to get out, they are caught and held in this net.

## **From ChrisShiva:**

Quote:

I'm an atheist who also has a great respect for authentic Buddhism. But I find it rather pathetic that you are devoting your life to this religion when it's obvious you do not understand even it's most basic ideas.

Yes, you are correct. I don't understand even the most basic ideas of Buddhism and I actually didn't even meet anyone who already would. The most basic ideas of Buddhism are Three Characteristics, Four Noble Truths and Dependent Origination. In Tipitaka it is said, that the Buddha appeared in the world just for one purpose - and that is (to explain) "eight letters" - a.ni.cca..du.kkha..a.na.tta (those are "Three Characteristics": impermanence, suffering and non-self). One understands these only after enlightenment. I am not enlightened.

## **From II\_Faisal\_II:**

Quote:

Did you try even once to click on this link you posted to back up your false unsupported claim? ... or -as usual- you blindly copy and paste from any anti-Islam website without even try to examine the allegation yourself and study it !!!?

For your information, the link you blindly copied and pasted does NOT work!

...

Here is the scientific paper <http://www.islamic-awareness.org/Quran/Contrad/External/sheba.html>

Yes, you are absolutely correct. I never studied errors in Qur'an. I come across errors in Qur'an in a strange way. When I was discussing Islam and Buddhism with one famous Muslim converter here in Sri Lanka, he showed me many mistakes (but most of them taken out of context and wrongly understood therefore actually non-mistakes) in Tipitaka, the Buddhist scripture. I wondered whether there are also some mistakes in Qur'an as he had claimed, that there are no mistakes there. So I went to Google and after encountering the flood of websites explaining hundreds of mistakes in Qur'an, I decided that studying mistakes in Qur'an is not an easy work. When you appeared here I decided to challenge you with them to see what you will do :) :). Thank you for replying, it is actually immensely beneficial to me.

As for the link, yes, you are correct. For the third time you are evidently correct, those three mistakes given by me were actually not mistakes, if well explained. Still, the fourth mistake was not answered though. Anyway, on page 7 of this forum I asked a new question, so if you can give a comment on it, it would be kind of you.

From henery8th:

Quote:

The Scientific World Is Turning to God

Harun Yahya

I do not accept Harun Yahya as he has made so many fallacious claims about Buddhism, that I don't believe that he would speak truth in other cases. He mixes whatever with whatever he likes, he uses rhetorical tricks and tells lies. It is one of the last people whose treatises I would seriously accept.

## **II\_Faisal\_II explains the third problem in Qur'an given by me:**

Introductory Comments:

phantomthewhite wrote:

One of the questions which puzzled the ancient Arabs was, "Where did the sun go when night time came?" The Qur'an gave them Allah's answer.

He [i.e. Zul-qarnain] followed, until he reached the setting of the sun. He found it set in a spring of murky water.

(Surah XVIII ( Kahf) vs. 85-86)

This is completely false (those anti-Islam sites fooled you again). The Jews asked Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) about the story of Zul-Qarnain to check if he's a true prophet or not (because only if he's a true prophet would tell the story of Zul-Qarnain as the Arabs never heard or knew about him before). Therefore, Allah (God) reveled the true story to Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) to answer those arrogant disbelieving jews.

phantomthewhite wrote:

We agree with Muslim scholars that Zul-qarnain refers to Alexander the Great (see Yusuf Ali's appendix on this subject in his translation of the Qur'an).

No...Muslims scholars do not agree that Zul-Qarnain was Alexander the Great. The characteristics of Zul-Qarnain described in the Quran are not applicable to Alexander the Great. It has been established that Zul-Qarnain of the Quran was a believer in the Oneness of God. In the case of Alexander the great, following few historical accounts further confirm that he was not a monotheist.

However, now the commentators are inclined to believe that Zul-Qarnain was Cyrus, an ancient king of Persia but the historical facts, which have come to light up to this time, are not sufficient to make any categorical assertion.

Visit this link for more evidences of Why Zul-Qarnain of the Quran is not Alexander the great? <http://www.answering-christianity.com/quran/5701.htm>

Answer to the claimed mistake:

Let us look at Noble Verses 18:83-90:

83. They ask thee concerning Zul-qarnain [or Dhul-qarnain]. Say, 'I will rehearse to you something of his story.'

84. Verily We established his power on earth, and We gave him the ways and the means to all ends.

85. One (such) way he followed,

86. Until, when he reached ( "balagha" .....it doesn't mean literal arrival. See Noble Verses 6:19, 12:22, 18:61, 18:86, 18:90, 18:93, 24:59, 28:14, 37:102, 46:15. "[color=darkblue]adraka" or "yudrik" mean literal arrival or reaching[/color]) the setting of (Magrib) the sun, he found it (wajada ha) set in a spring of murky water: Near it (the water) he found a People: We said: 'O Zul-qarnain! (thou hast authority,) either to punish them, or to treat them with kindness.'

87. He said: 'Whoever doth wrong, him shall we punish; then shall he be sent back to his Lord; and He will punish him with a punishment unheard-of (before).

88. But whoever believes, and works righteousness,- he shall have a goodly reward, and easy will be his task as We order it by our Command.'

89. Then followed he (another) way,

90. Until, when he came (balagha....not literal.) to the rising of the sun, he found it rising on a people for whom We had provided no covering protection against the sun.

There are several points and proofs to notice here:

1- ' The Arabic word used here is... it is 'wajada' meaning, 'it appeared to Zulqarnain. So 'wajada' means - if you look up in the dictionary also, it means it appeared.' So Allah is describing what appeared to Zulqarnain.

2- The Arabic word used for the setting of is 'Magrib' - It can be used for time, as well as place. When we say 'sunset' – 'sunset' can be taken for time. If I say... 'The sun sets at 7 p.m.'; I am using it for time. If I say... 'The 'Sun sets in the West', it means I am taking it for place. So here if we use the word 'Magrib' for time. So Zulqarnain did not reach that place of sunset - used - as time - He reached at the time of sun set.

3- Not a single Muslim scholar interpreted this Noble Verse as the SUN SETTING INSIDE THE Murky spring water.

4- On the contrary in point #3, the Muslim scholars were the first to recognize earth as a spherical globe. (visit this link for the evidences Early Muslim Consensus: The Earth is Round [http://www.answering-christianity.com/earth\\_round.htm](http://www.answering-christianity.com/earth_round.htm)

5- If the intention of Noble Verses 18:83-90 was that the sun literally set inside the murky spring, then it would have had to rise back again from the West and set into another murky spring in the East, which the Glorious Quran never made any mention of, and rise back from the East and set in the West, and rise back from the West and set in the East, and so on.

6- If we take the above Noble Verses LITERALLY, then this means that the sun would have to bounce back and forth between the west and the east.

The sun had always risen from the east and set in the west in a constant circular motion. To our human perspective, the sun had always rose from the east, and set in the west, and then goes under the earth to rise back from the east and so on. The sun could not physically set on a lake or Spring, because that area of water could not have space or hole under it where the sun would go through it to then go under the earth so it would rise back up again from the east.

Did the sun ever rise from the west? No, and the Quran never mentioned that.

Did the sun ever bounce back and forth between the east and the west in its rising and setting? No, and the Quran never mentioned that.

8- Clearly, the setting of the sun, is a figurative speech (see examples of Noble Verses in the link below) indicating that he reached a town with a spring or lake in it, and he meditated through the beautiful view of the setting of the sun on that town.

Please visit: Ample figurative and poetical Noble Verses in the Noble Quran [http://www.answering-christianity.com/bible\\_quran\\_differences.htm](http://www.answering-christianity.com/bible_quran_differences.htm) .

We now can indisputably say that the Speech in the above Noble Verses is Figurative and not Literal. Otherwise, we are left with the explanation of why the sun never rose from the west. Not even once! Also, if we take that verse (86) literally then we have to do the same with verse (90):

18:90. Until, when he came (balagha....not literal.) to the rising of the sun, he found it rising on a people for whom We had provided no covering protection against the sun.

No sane person will interpret/understand (, he found it rising on a people) as the sun literally rises on those people. When we use these words, like 'sunrise' and 'sunset' - does the sun rise? Scientifically, sun does not rise - neither does the sun set. We know scientifically, that the sun does not set at all. It is the rotation of the earth, which gives rise to sunrise and sunset. But yet you read in the everyday papers mentioning, sunrise at 6 a.m. sun sets at 7.00 p.m. Oh! The newspapers are wrong – Unscientific!! It is is a figurative speech. It is just a usage of words. And Allah has given the guidance for the human beings also - He uses so, that we understand. So it is just 'sunset' - Not that it is actually setting - Not that sun is actually rising.

END

## **My questions to II\_Faisal\_II:**

(a) You said: "And the sun runs on its fixed course for a term (appointed)."

Please, how do you know, that this "fixed course" of Sun is course in Milky Way and not the (wrongly understood) straight course from East to West above the earth (and at night from West to East under the earth)?

(b) Qur'an says, that it is easily understandable (if your answer depends on exact citation then you don't need to answer, I actually don't know where it is in Qur'an). Then, why are the translations not clear and why there are so many misconceptions in regards to Qur'an from those, who read it whole and studied it (even in Arabic language)? I don't understand why people, who read Qur'an in its original language misunderstood the all-peacefulness of it and went to kill

hundreds of people. Doesn't this look like a kind of contradiction?

(c) There are some people (including me) who accept possibility, that Qur'an was revealed by extraterrestrials, who, with the purpose of making us fearing them, presented themselves as a God and asked some people (such as Mohammad pbuh) to make known information such as that written in Qur'an. (This "extraterrestrials' concept" is explained in the Claude Vorilhon's book "Intelligent Design"). Interesting is that the word for God in bible (Elohim) is actually plural (which would substantiate the claim that God is actually extraterrestrials). Please, tell me, how can you substantiate that author of Qur'an was God and not extraterrestrials? (You may think that this is a mad question not needed to be answered, but I assure you that more and more people seriously believe it.)

## **henery8th tries to answer my questions:**

hey i try to answer some your questions

first of all

allah said ( and we have indeed made the quoran easy to understand and remember; than is there any that will remember ( or recieve admonition)?

secondly since the antiquity in anybook in its preface you find the writer writes to whom find any error or mistakes please contact to correct them and the writer apologises from his lecturers

but in the quoran in the biginning of the book you find

allah said( this the book (the quoran) whereof there is no doubt, a guidance to those who are allmottaquin ( the pious believers of islamic monotheism)) full of confidence that there's no error. the absolut perfect ,the absolut power and no one in this galaxy has thes features except the creator

## **justwannachat reacts:**

It is a theory that the God/s of the Bible were actually aliens and it is possible to view the scriptures (early books at least) as such. So I see this a a valid question and certainly not a "mad" one.

But the only flaw I find is that if this were true then why can I still experience God through communication?

Is it possible too that they were not presenting themselves as God but actually telling us about God?

That in awe, in recording the events ..... the authors misunderstood?

Does that not still happen today ..... that what is said is misunderstood?

## **henery8th reacts:**

some evidence of god's existence

There have always been people who believed in the existence of God and there have always been those who have denied in His existence. We must realize there are those who will never believe no matter how much proof or evidence we produce. The reason is some people don't want to believe in a Creator or Sustainer. They would not like to consider one day they will have to answer for their actions and for their refusal to acknowledge their Benefactor to whom they owe their very existence. We come to know it is not so much a matter of us trying to convey our beliefs as it is for them to set aside

preconceived prejudices against proper belief. If they refuse even with evident proofs in front of them, this is not between us and them; it is between them and their Creator. Again, it is not our job to "prove" anything to anyone. We only need to present the facts in truth and allow the listener to make up their own mind.

one approach is to ask someone to consider what it would be like if someone told us about a fast food restaurant operating itself without any people there? The food just cooks itself, files from the kitchen to the table and then when we are done, the dishes jump back the kitchen to wash themselves. This is too crazy for anyone to even think about.

After reflecting on all of the above, how could we look to the universe above us through a telescope or observe the cells in a microscope and then think all of this came about as a result of a "big bang" or some "accident"?

good luck pals

## **II\_Faisal\_II wrote:**

The amazing fine tuning in the Universe without flaws makes it impossible to exist by chance. This is enough evidence of Allah's (God's) Creation.

"He (Allah) Who created the seven heavens in layers. You will not find any flaw in the creation of the All-Merciful. Look again-do you see any gaps? Then look again and again. Your sight will return to you dazzled and exhausted!" [The Noble Quran, 67:3-4]

Every thing in this Universe is well-tuned to a certain purpose , no room here for chance . Paul Davies (British astrophysicist) says : "There is for me powerful evidence that there is something going on behind it all....It seems as though somebody has fine-tuned nature's numbers to make the Universe....The impression of design is overwhelming".

Allah (God) refers to the well-tuned universe in a verse that condense heavy volumes in just few words that arise ecstasy in the human soul . Allah Almighty says:

" Lo! We (Allah) have created every thing by measure."

[The Noble Quran, 54 :49]

"And the heaven: He (Allah) has raised it high, and He has set up the Balance."

[The Noble Quran 55:7]

In the following table, it shows how every thing is balanced and is calculated to an extent that the subtle difference can make life impossible and even end the universe before it begins. In this table , you will see some consonants in the universe:

## **Norse04 gives the simile with the water and glass:**

Yes, since we humans can't comprehend the universe, some of us think that it was made for us, rather than the other way around.

Which came first? The universe or life? We know it was the universe.

Imagine an allegory, where the universe is symbolised by water, and all life is symbolised by a glass. What happens when you pour water into a glass?

Is the water made specifically to fit into a glass, or is the glass made to contain the water? Religious people will say that the water (universe) was created with the specific purpose of fitting into the glass, will scientists (and ungodly people like me) would say that the glass (life) evolved to contain the water.

There could be no other outcome for life, than that we're perfectly adapted for the universe. We're here! We evolved in this universe, which is why it's perfect for us.

## **My three humble questions to Muslims**

### **I (phantomthewhite) wrote:**

Please, answer me these questions, not any other questions in this topic. I understand, that Islam is the Word of God, perfect and without a single mistake, that is no problem. Even according to Buddhism such a book can be written (don't comment this, please). But I really wonder how should a good Muslim (I am not a Muslim) answer these questions to himself, or how you, as a Muslim, answer those questions. Thank you in advance for decent answers.

(1) Qur'an says, that it is easily understandable (if your answer depends on exact citation then you don't need to answer, I actually don't know where it is in Qur'an). Then, why are the translations not clear and why there are so many misconceptions in regards to Qur'an from those, who read it whole and studied it (even in Arabic language)? I don't understand why people, who read Qur'an in its original language misunderstood the all-peacefulness of it and went to kill hundreds of people. Doesn't this look like a kind of contradiction?

(2) There are some people (including me) who accept possibility, that Qur'an was revealed by extraterrestrials, who, with the purpose of making us fearing them, presented themselves as a God and asked some people (such as Mohammad pbuh) to make known information such as that written in Qur'an. (This "extraterrestrials' concept" is explained in the Claude Vorilhon's book "Intelligent Design"). Interesting is that the word for God in bible (Elohim) is actually plural (which would substantiate the claim that God is actually extraterrestrials). Please, tell me, how can you substantiate that author of Qur'an was God and not extraterrestrials? (You may think that this is a mad question not needed to be answered, but I assure you that more and more people seriously believe it.)

(3) Do you really believe, that Allah will put to hell forever all non-believers regardless their other good acts and reward with heaven (though after some period in hell) all murderers and robbers who worshiped him?

### **Peaceful3 wrote:**

1 -Even One of my friend who was a Muslim also asked me same question before she wanted to embrace Islam.She was afraid to go astray after she saw some Muslims reading same book(Qur'an) but somehow they dont get the real message...

The answer is, because If you wanna believe and fallow something according to your own statements, No one (Even not Quran) can stop you to do that action. For example, some people who really dont know anything about Islam, just see a verse in Quran and comment it so easily without searching Why this verse was revealed? When It was revealed? Or to whom It was revealed? Quran is really not such a complicated book. But some people get it all wrong, especally about this "Jihad" or "holy war" misconpeption. Probably, these people are just so ignorant that they dont wanna understand Islam truly, but they rather fallow their own way. As I said, Quran is not such a complicated book at all, but yes for some verses Its required to do some search and gain knowledge. But If you ( I mean, generally "you") just wanna fallow your own ideas and ignorant, as long as you dont wanna be guided, who can guide you?

2- Its a rather nice question what you asked.. Actually there are many ways to understand it, I will tell you what I remember at moment and they are enough to ensure yourself Quran was really word of God.

As you know, Quran was revealed 1400 years ago and there have never been any other versions of Quran through history. So being aware of this fact, we can check out what was written in Quran;

The message in Quran is not just about warning disbelievers and giving glad tidings to good fallowers. Quran is such a great scientific book as well. It has so many verses in it, which couldnt have been observed 1400 years ago from now. In fact, many scientific facts in it, couldnt have been invented untill last centuries. So how come an illiterate man (Mohammad) made up a such statements on his mind which filled 600 pages of amazing, linguistic of arabic? Some people claim, maybe he was so lucky. Maybe for one verse, he was lucky, maybe for 2, he was lucky. But Quran is such a book full of such statement. How luck a man can be? And In itself, Quran, Allah says If you claim Quran to be words of Mohammad, then just a bring a Chapter or even a verse like that. And no one could do it then. They just accepted immediately his message. "this is only one God Allah, you are his messenger" or they had to deny just because beliving in Quran was going to affect their money circumstance or other bad behaviours of them (for example, they were gambling, drinking alcahol, killing innocent people whereas with Quran Allah forbid those actions)

If you are not convinced with that , I will try to explain other reasons why Quran has to be word of Creator.

3- Since I have so little knowledge compared with my Creator, as I undoubtfully believe in Quran, I can just say "Allah knows best" ,, But I have no doubt, even If was a non-Muslim who wouldnt accept Quran as words of my Creator, I wouldnt live any moment of rest of my life without having fear "What If I will really get into hell fire? What If this Quran is word of God? What If I really regret too m uch and there will be no coming back?" ... I have never heard from a good fallower, Muslim "What If Quran is not word of God and my deeds will be rubbish in the end" ,, because nothing a Muslim do, doest affect him in bad way. But rather, It changes your life to be a Muslim, in so many good ways...

### **My reply to Peaceful3:**

Quote:

1. ... Quran is really not such a complicated book. But some people get it all wrong, especally about this "Jihad" or "holy war" misconpeption. ...

I rather wonder, why there are religious scriptures which never lead their readers to kill. So, just for example, there is Dao-De-Jing of Taoism, Tipitaka of Buddhism and surely many other, which, after being read, didnt ever support their readers to kill or steal in any way. Tell me, how many wars have been done in the name of Dao-De-Jing or Tipitaka? As far as I

know - 0 (by words - zero). However, how many wars have done in the name of Qur'an? As far as I know, hundreds ... If Tipitaka is not the word of God, but of a human, and it is so large that more than 40 big books are needed for one hard copy, how is it possible that there is no verse that would help the reader to kill? How is it possible, that Qur'an, which is just 600 pages (that is just one book large) can help the reader to kill and say, that it is easily comprehensible? It is like an irony, that Tipitaka explains, that the Buddha's teaching is difficult to be understood ... :) As such I label your argument as irrelevant and ask for another one.

Quote:

2. ... Allah says If you claim Quran to be words of Mohammad, then just bring a Chapter or even a verse like that. ...

Yes, in the introduction to this forum-topic I already explain, that I even accept, that Qur'an may have been dictated by a divine being and that it may be without mistakes. However, me and many other people have a doubt, that this "holy" book was not dictated by a "divine" being, but by a man or being living in another planet (we call them "extraterrestrials"). There are many similar books to Qur'an, which are also understood as "holy" book and which are similar in their teaching - historically: Zoroastrians's Avesta, Jew's Torah, Christians' bible, Muslims' Qur'an, Sikhs' Granth Sahib, Baha'is' Kitáb-i-Aqdas and certainly many more. In all these books the existence of the only God Creator is presented and (in those that I have studied) the fear of God and worshipping him (either just internally (like in Sikhism) or also by physically done worship (like in Islam) ) are encouraged and established.

Now what is sure, that if all these books contain similar teaching, much probably their source will be same or similar. There is another book, which is again very similar to the previously mentioned ones, and which is also a "revelation" and a basis for "a religion". This book explains, that all those books were inspired by an extraterrestrial (that is a human or other being from another planet), whose planet was afraid of us and they decided to teach us that they are God, so that we fear them. That would explain, why in Bible the word for God (Elohim) is actually plural. The book was dictated by the chief extraterrestrial in their planet (his name is Yahweh) directly to Rael when they met in a Flying Saucer in France, Puy de Lassolas, near Clermont-Ferrand, December 13th, 1973. This book is "Intelligent Design" written by Claude Vorilhon aka Rael, the founder of the world famous religious movement called MADECH or Raelian Movement. (if you like, PM me, I'll give you link to download the book).

I would like to know as much statements in Qur'an as possible, which prove, that the "God" is not an extraterrestrial being who just made up a story to have fun (or rather to protect his planet against possible danger). Please, this danger is not meant in connection to the present situation, but in connection to future situation when we are expected to have enough means to threaten the other planet. It would be useful to mention, that those extraterrestrials reveal their "true colors" as they think, that though we cannot threaten them now, we are a threat to our own existence. Their revelation is thus done out of compassion. This revelation to Rael was done in 70's, when the "threat" was quite high.

You explained, that the Qur'an was given by a being not living in this planet, but that was not the question. Question was, why that being cannot be a mortal human from another planet, who had a very good knowledge of science and psychology at the time when he dictated the Qur'an. As such I label your argument as irrelevant and ask for another one.

Quote:

3. ... If I was a non-Muslim who wouldnt accept Quran as words of my Creator, I wouldnt live any moment of rest of my life without having fear "What If I will really get into hell fire? What If this Quran is word of God? ...

Dear Peaceful3, though it was mentioned in discussions where I saw you contributed, I will mention it again. There is a theory called "Pascal's Wager" which actually states the same thing what you have written. However, there are some problems with that theory (see [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pascal%27s\\_Wager#Anti-Pascal\\_wager](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pascal%27s_Wager#Anti-Pascal_wager)) :

Quote:

The wager assumes that one can consciously decide. Critics argue that they cannot do this, and therefore Pascal's Wager could only ever be an argument for feigning belief in God. In addition, an omniscient God would presumably see through the deception. Richard Dawkins writes "Would you bet on God's valuing dishonestly faked belief (or even honest belief) over honest skepticism?"

Quote:

The French intellectual Louis Althusser is critical of Pascal for inverting the order of things. By arguing that we should first act and then gain faith Pascal is in fact subjecting us to physical domination through use of ideological power (i.e. we are being forced to physically kneel down, pray, etc.).

As such, the fear that God would reward you if you worshiped him out of fear that he may exist may finally turn into eternal punishment in hell (as your Qur'an promises for non-believers). If you really want to follow the thing, that you have written here, I would beg you to read other religious books, where another belief is forced with the threat of hell, i.e. "if you don't follow this book, you will be burnt in hell." Thus you would have to worship Christ as the God as the Bible requires it and in the same time reject the Christ's Godhood as Qur'an requires it. In Buddhist books there are also mentioned things, which one should believe if one doesn't like to be born in hell or as an animal after his/her death: next life, enlightenment, Buddha's enlightenment, existence of thousands of gods (as "spontaneously reborn beings" or "opapatika" ) and other things are also explained as compulsory if you don't want to be reborn in hell or as an animal. The extraterrestrials in the book "Intelligent Design" that I mentioned before also threaten, that if you don't believe, that all the "holy" scriptures were actually revealed by them and that we are actually scientifically biologically created by them, you are also going to be (severely?) punished, because they want to clone dead people and punish and reward them for their previous deeds. As this "revelation" is "the last revelation of aliens" I think that if you want to follow Pascal's wager, I would advice you to follow it in connection with Rael and his movement. I myself believe in existence of aliens and their scientific creation of us, as it is completely in accordance with the Buddha's teaching and as it seems to be best explanation on the things that happen in the world, that are in the scriptures and that those people in TV-news still didn't explain you.

As such I label your argument as irrelevant and ask for another one.

### **Answer from Peaceful3:**

First,, I wanna begin from "Killing people". I told that this is such a big misconception for people who just didnt study Quran and Islam altogether. But they rather just pick up some verses from Quran and regardless to time it was revealed they think this "kiling" is for every area of human being . This is just a misconception as I said. And this is a big issue that we can discuss here. But I will try to make it as simple as I can as If you dont know anything about Islam and Quran.

When you look up this verses about "killing", there are verses in Quran as below;

"And fight in the Way of Allâh[] those who fight you, but transgress not the limits. Truly, Allâh likes not the transgressors.  
"(chapter 2,verse 190)

"holy fighting in Allâh's Cause is ordained for you (Muslims) though you dislike it, and it may be that you dislike a thing which is good for you and that you like a thing which is bad for you. Allâh knows but you do not know. (chapter 2 verse 216)

Isn't that clear, war is permissible just when those disbelievers fight against you? When they try to kick you out of country, or when they try to oppress, kill those Muslims, Of course Allah is letting those Muslims to fight against them. Is it logical to just wait for death when someone attacks you? Are you gonna just say "I want peace, but If you wanna kill me, come and do it, I will not defend myself" ?

(You can find various informations about wars that Prophet Mohammad got involved, you will see how those disbelievers were fighting and torturing those Muslims, so war was like a compulsion for them)

"...if anyone killed a person not in retaliation of murder, or (and) to spread mischief in the land - it would be as if he killed all mankind, and if anyone saved a life, it would be as if he saved the life of all mankind. And indeed, there came to them Our Messengers with clear proofs, evidences, and signs, even then after that many of them continued to exceed the limits (e.g. by doing oppression unjustly and exceeding beyond the limits set by Allâh by committing the major sins) in the land!.  
[] (Chapter 5 verse 32)

It's again obvious Allah already emphasized in another verse that killing one innocent person is like killing all people which shows Allah doesn't want people to cause war, but he just wants believers to protect themselves otherwise, no one can kill any other, never... So how can a person understand Quran teaches them to kill each other, make war? It's really a big misconception, nothing else. And also if you search and study the sayings of the last messenger, Mohammad you will see he always ordered believers to be brothers and what is more interesting, he also ordered Muslims not to fight, steal, kill other non-believers. He and his followers lived in peace with all those Jewish. How come someone still claims "Islam was spread by his sword? ". It's really sad but nonsense.

And about your other question, I assumed that you wonder what if Allah is an alien from another galaxy or sth like ?

Allah is making it clear that he is Creator. There is no other Creator, God but Allah. But if you still want to believe "What if there are others, What if Allah is an alien from another galaxy?" I can not help you anymore, I am sorry. It's beyond my permission to force you believe in Allah as your creator. If there are any other aliens living in other areas except our planet, you should go and search for them in there. But Allah says that he is already Creator of everything which includes galaxies and all those systems as well. Why need to look for any other being as God ? Even if there are other creations, that we don't have any strong knowledge yet, they will be still creation of Allah, which will not change anything.

### **My reply to Peaceful3:**

You said:

Quote:

Isn't that clear, war is permissible just when those disbelievers fight against you? When they try to kick you out of country, or when they try to oppress, kill those Muslims, Of course Allah is letting those Muslims to fight against them. Is it logical to

just wait for death when someone attacks you? Are you gonna just say "I want peace,but If you wanna kill me,come and do it,I will not defend myself" ?

There are peaceful ways how to solve war. When Muslims came to India and killed thousands of people, the Buddhists did not fight. They did not fight. Again, they did not fight. But according to you, they had to. Allah supports killing. That is like if you say, that truth is a fallacy. It is a nonsense. Allah doesn't support killing, Qur'an is wrong in this matter. I don't believe, that Allah, the great God, would ever suggest that killing is good. I agree with existence of Allah, but not with the qualities explained in Qur'an (selfishness, pride, violence, mercilessness, biased attitude etc.) but with the Allah explained in Buddhist scripture (loving kindness, compassion, mutual-joy and equanimity). Your God is a nonsense, you can see it from my explanation. How can ever true be fallacy? It cannot. Similarly, God can't ever encourage anyone to kill even in self-defense.

You said:

Quote:

And indeed, there came to them Our Messengers with clear proofs, evidences, and signs, even then after that many of them continued to exceed the limits (e.g. by doing oppression unjustly and exceeding beyond the limits set by Allāh by committing the major sins) in the land!.[] (Chapter 5 verse 32)

What is the punishment for those, who transgress and exceed limits set by Allah? Few years in hell and then eternal heaven? You really believe this? :(

You said:

Quote:

Mohammad you will see he always ordered believers to be brothers and what is more interesting,he also ordered Muslims not to fight,steal,kill other non-believers.

Quote:

<http://jmm.aaa.net.au/articles/15679.htm>

Finally the command for indiscriminate Jihad against all unbelievers at all times and places was given which has been valid ever since until the day of Judgement. A typical verse is the ♦sword verse♦ Sura 9:5 Sura 9:5 But when the forbidden months are past then fight and slay the pagans wherever ye find them and seize them beleaguer them and lie in wait for them in every stratagem (of war). This verse is cited more than any other as abrogating less aggressive Qur♦anic passages. It is said to have abrogated no fewer than 124 verses of the Qur♦an. The reference to the sacred months is said to mean that after this specific period of sacred month, you need not respect any sacred months any more, but can fight whenever it is convenient.

Quote:

<http://jmm.aaa.net.au/articles/15679.htm>

Sura 2:216 Fighting is prescribed for you and ye dislike it. But it is possible that ye dislike a thing which is good for you and that ye love a thing which is bad for you. But Allah knoweth and ye know not. Sura 2:244 Then fight in the cause of Allah and know that Allah heareth and knoweth all things. Sura 4:76 Those who believe fight in the cause of Allah and those who reject faith fight in the cause of evil: so fight ye against the friends of Satan: feeble indeed is the cunning of Satan.

It seems to me, that Allah doesn't mind when people are killed. See these three verses from Tipitaka, the Buddhist scripture:

Quote:

"He abused me, he beat me, he defeated me, he robbed me," - the hatred of those who cherish such thoughts is not appeased.

Dhammapada 1,3

Quote:

"He abused me, he beat me, he defeated me, he robbed me" - the hatred of those who do not cherish such thoughts is appeased.

Dhammapada 1,4

Quote:

"Hatred never ceases by hatred in this world. By love alone they cease. This is an ancient Law.

Dhammapada 1,5

The verses written in Qur'an certainly lead to killing and killing is done by Muslims. Therefore, there is no contradiction. Only the explanation, that Qur'an is a peaceful book is a fallacy. I wonder that you can worship a God, who encourages violence. I don't worship any God, but if I had to, my God would have completely different qualities from your Allah, my God would have these four qualities:

1. Loving-kindness
2. Compassion
3. Mutual Joy
4. Equanimity

Allah described in Qur'an has none of these. Therefore your God either does not exist or there was some problem with the author of the book...

You said:

Quote:

But Allah says that he is already Creator of everything which includes galaxies and all those systems as well. Why need to look for any other being as God ?

The interesting thing about the "message" from Rael is, that the extraterrestrials themselves confess, that they told us lies when they were dictating the holy books. Those lies, such as that they are the creator God etc. were given to us out of fear, that they have, as they were afraid that we may attack them. This is a major problem when answering my second question, because whatever passage from Qur'an you quote I may label as "another lie". In this regard I label my question as unanswerable.

Here is brief summary of present state of my three humble questions:

1. Qur'an endorses violence and violence is done. The claim, that Qur'an is peaceful is fallacy. As such my answer was answered.

2. The fact whether it were aliens who revealed Qur'an to Mohammad or not is difficult to be attacked as anything can be simply called "clever deception done by them" etc. As such my answer seems to be unanswerable.

3. I still didn't get satisfactory answer for this question.

## **II\_Faisal\_II wrote:**

phantomthewhite wrote:

What I don't understand is, that so many people descend on that person's momentarily low thinking and think like him. If I hit you, will you also hit me? I don't know how in other religions, but according to Buddha, if you hit me, then if I hit you I would not be considered as the Buddha's disciple any more. We don't need to retaliate, revenge is not wise and wise people know it.

Hi phantom ...

before I attempt to answer your questions... let me ask you this simple question as you are a Buddhist believer:

Question: Suppose -God forbids- that one of the criminals broke into your house, and massacred your wife and raped her then killed your child, will you LOVE HIM, WILL YOU FORGIVE HIM and let him go without punishment !!!!?

## **shailesh reacts to II\_Faisal\_II:**

I would like to say something here. Mainly, your question is addressed to Phantom, I would like to say that Hinduism and BUddhism believe in forgive and forget. If you forgive somebody for his sins, one day he will be ashamed of his deeds and he will surely repent. His repentance may not bring back your wife and kids but surely he will not commit the crime again. Islamic fundamentalists need to be tolerant. Violence can never solve any problem. World needs Gandhi, Buddha, Martin Luther King and Nelson Mandela more than ever before.

## **My reply to II\_Faisal\_II:**

Quote:

Question: Suppose -God forbids- that one of the criminals broke into your house, and massacred your wife and raped her then killed your child, will you LOVE HIM, WILL YOU FORGIVE HIM and let him go without punishment !!!!?

First I would like to thank shailesh for his perfectly correct comment. I will only give more exact examples from what the

Buddha taught. One is, that the Buddha explained, that if others cut monk's hands, legs, prick out his eyes, cut off his tongue and kick him to death, that monk should wish them happiness. If a monk in such a situation wish them suffering or is angry with them, then he is never more understood as the Buddha's disciple. Such a thing was said by the Buddha himself. It may be clear from this example, that massacring and raping wife and then killing one's child also shouldn't ever be reason for committing other atrocities by the victim.

There is one story (if you like I'll make the effort and find you the exact sutta ) when a monk had to go to a certain village, where people were very cruel. The Buddha spoke to the monk in this manner:

The Buddha: What will you do, if the people will blame you?

Monk: I will be glad that they do not hurt me.

The Buddha: What will you do, if they hurt you?

Monk: I will be glad that they don't cut my legs and hands.

The Buddha: What will you do if they cut your legs and hands?

Monk: I will be glad that they don't kill me.

...

Then the Buddha asked what would the monk think if the monk was killed by them, but I have to apologize because I don't remember what was the monk's answer. (What an embarrassment :) . )

There is also this famous verse given by the Buddha:

"Hatred never ceases by hatred in this world. By  
love alone they cease. This is an ancient Law."

(Dhammapada, 1,5)

The problem is, that whatever bad we do, even in self-defense or as a revenge, all that is counted as our "intentionally committed actions" (or kamma/karma) and as such their consequence will never miss us. All actions that we commit intentionally will bring about consequences equal to the intensity and frequency of those actions. This is one of the main things why I think, that the Buddha's teaching was correct, because it seems to be logical - throughout this life we cannot acquire all consequences of our actions, so we must be reborn and in the next life we can taste the results of our previous actions. Unfortunately in the next world we do another actions, and as such this "making actions" and "tasting rewards" never find an end. There is only one end, and that is achieved by eradicating all roots of greed, hatred and ignorance as these three are the main fuel for intentionally committed actions. If we can eradicate greed, hatred and ignorance by understanding the impermanence, suffering and soullessness of the world, we can attain enlightenment and thus make an end to the suffering and rebirth. Another thing that I really admire in Buddhism is, that we can attain the enlightenment in this very life without waiting for death, I can attain it when I am 23 or whatever age and live another fifty or hundred years. (Understanding this made me become an ascetic.) That enlightenment means, that "a light appears in the darkness". Here the "darkness" means ignorance and "light" means understanding. Thus enlightenment doesn't mean switch on light in a room, but understanding the nature of the world and eradicating defilements of mind. This was a bit off topic, but I really enjoy speaking about it.

**Reply from II\_Faisal\_II:**

Pahntom ...let me be sure about your opinion and belief:

My Question was: Suppose -God forbids- that one of the criminals broke into your house, and massacred your wife and raped her then killed your child, will you LOVE HIM, WILL YOU FORGIVE HIM and let him go without punishment !!!!?

As I understood from your replay, your answer is as follows:

Q: will you LOVE HIM? .... your answer: YES.

Q: WILL YOU FORGIVE HIM and let him go without punishment !!!!? ... your answer: YES.

Please correct me if I misunderstood your answers!

## **My reply to II\_Faisal\_II:**

Dear Faisal, you are absolutely correct. I would wish him to be happy, satisfied, live long life let him go without any punishment. Have you heard about something like "forgiveness"?

## **reaction from dreamman6:**

phantomthewhite wrote:

Please, answer me these questions, not any other questions in this topic. I understand, that Islam is the Word of God, perfect and without a single mistake, that is no problem. Even according to Buddhism such a book can be written (don't comment this, please). But I really wonder how should a good Muslim (I am not a Muslim) answer these questions to himself, or how you, as a Muslim, answer those questions. Thank you in advance for decent answers.

(1) Qur'an says, that it is easily understandable (if your answer depends on exact citation then you don't need to answer, I actually don't know where it is in Qur'an). Then, why are the translations not clear and why there are so many misconceptions in regards to Qur'an from those, who read it whole and studied it (even in Arabic language)? I don't understand why people, who read Qur'an in its original language misunderstood the all-peacefulness of it and went to kill hundreds of people. Doesn't this look like a kind of contradiction?

When and where the Muslims killed hundreds of people , but

What do u say a about the thousands of peace Muslims who killed in Kosovo

and the millions of peace Muslims who killed in Iraq and Afghanistan , Palestin .....

## **Lavite reacts:**

Sure it can. Violence has solved far more problems than non-violence. How many examples would you like?

The removal of Hitler is of course an obvious one. Non-violence only works if it can influence the other party. It certainly would not have worked on the Mongols in the 13th Century either.

## **shailesh reacts:**

Yes, Hitler was removed by violence but at what cost? How many million people lost lives? When Gandhi started his non-violent movement in South Africa and India, British empire was at the peak. If you know, Winston Churchill once said ' look a naked fakir is asking for freedom from the Queen '!!!! And the mighty British Empire had to surrender to the non violence movement of the same naked fakir. Nelson Mandela is still here to prove his non-violence movement. Let us see if violence can bring peace in Afghanistan, Iraq, Israel, Palestine and Pakistan. Mighty Russia failed in Afghanistan, U.S.failed in Vietnam. There are numerous examples. I firmly believe, non-violence is a tough path but very effective even today.

## **My reaction:**

<http://www.masada2000.org/islam.html> :

Quote:

Over the last 1400 years, 270 million non-believers were murdered by Muslim jihadists.

Islam destroyed the Christian Middle East and Christian North Africa. It is estimated that upwards of 60 million Christians were slaughtered during this conquest.

Also, half the Hindu civilization was annihilated and 80 million Hindus murdered.

Islamic jihad also destroyed over 10 million Buddhists.

<http://www.hvk.org/articles/1003/48.html>

Quote:

According to the International Institute of Strategic Studies, 32 armed conflicts were underway in 2000; more than two thirds involved Muslims. Yet Muslims are only about one fifth of the world's population.

<http://markhumphrys.com/islam.killings.html>

This is just a result of short search in Google. I hope nobody will criticize me for cutting and pasting real facts (though unpleasant) from websites.

## shailesh reacts:

You are right to a large extent . There were no Muslims in India before Muslim rulers from Turkey, Uzbekistan, Iran invaded India. Most of the Muslims living in India today are converted. Muslim rulers forced to convert and this is not just an allegation against Muslims but this is cited here as a plain fact which is well documented in the Indian history. Even the father of Nation of Pakistan Mohammad ali Jinnah's grand father was a Hindu.

## II\_Faisal\_II reacts:

Post Posted: 08 Sep 2010 02:31

Reply with quote

phantomthewhite wrote:

Quote:

When and where the Muslims killed hundreds of people , but

What do u say a about the thousands of peace Muslims who killed in Kosovo

and the millions of peace Muslims who killed in Iraq and Afghanistan , Palestin .....

<http://www.masada2000.org/islam.html> :

Quote:

Over the last 1400 years, 270 million non-believers were murdered by Muslim jihadists.

Islam destroyed the Christian Middle East and Christian North Africa. It is estimated that upwards of 60 million Christians were slaughtered during this conquest.

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Quote:

According to the International Institute of Strategic Studies, 32 armed conflicts were underway in 2000; more than two thirds involved Muslims. Yet Muslims are only about one fifth of the world's population.

<http://markhumphrys.com/islam.killings.html>

This is just a result of short search in Google. I hope nobody will criticize me for cutting and pasting real facts (though unpleasant) from websites.

Phantom... didn't I request from you to read and do your own honest research from credible sources rather than picking lies from anti-Islam websites and blindly copy and paste them here? ... You do not seem to be an honest Truth seeker.

This is your first website you copied blindly from <http://www.masada2000.org/index.html> Read carefully the homepage of the site. See how much evil, blind hate, and lies are posted there towards Muslims. No wonder, it is a ZIONIST-Israeli website. So, is that your credible source about Islam?

I want you to tell me from any credible unbiased historical source that back up this mega-LIE you posted:

Quote:

Over the last 1400 years, 270 million non-believers were murdered by Muslim jihadists.

Islam destroyed the Christian Middle East and Christian North Africa. It is estimated that upwards of 60 million Christians were slaughtered during this conquest.

Also, half the Hindu civilization was annihilated and 80 million Hindus murdered.

Otherwise, you must show your honesty by apologizing to all Muslims here for pasting nasty Zionist lies against them.

Same is said about your second source <http://www.hvk.org/> . It belongs to a known hindu anti-Islam group "Hindutva" analogs to the KKK in U.S.A.

Again: Is this your credible unbiased source about Islam !?

Finally, this is your third source <http://markhumphrys.com/islam.killings.html>. I am going to quote the first introductory lines of this Zionist anti-Islam site:

Quote:

MarkHumphrys.com

Irish. Atheist. Liberal-right. Anti-jihad. Pro-American. Pro-Israel.

Is this your credible source about Islam!!!?

Why you never use unbiased credible sources to back up your false claims? ... The answer is obvious...

You should know that this lack of honesty gives bad reputation to the Buddhism you belong to.

## **I reply to Faisal:**

To Faisal -

I don't know what is problem with being pro-israel, can you tell me the reason or at least give me a direct link to information?

The other thing is, why do you refuse the first link I gave telling that it is done by Zionists? Can you back up your claim? Anyway, please, I am interested in the topic of Zionist, do you know about some good source of information? (Or if possible Video on Youtube or something or even better PDF (with link please) ?)

The fact that Muslims killed thousands and thousands (I don't know whether millions) is well known to the Buddhist society. Just see here the explanation from one Czech author who wrote about India - Muslims came to Buddhist temples and wanted to kill the monks there. The monks, without running or doing any problems, calmly came under the sword and let the Muslims to kill them. Muslims killed thousands of peaceful monks this way.

I don't know how do you want to claim, that massacre-hungry Muslims are ever following a good religion. Yes, if someone kills my wife and child, I would wish him to be happy. But when I think that thousands of peaceful monks were killed by masochistic followers of Satan I am really very, very, extremely sad. And this is a really strong emotion. I wonder what would you say if hundreds of Buddhist came to Iran and killed there thousands of peaceful Muslims. Fortunately, Buddhists will never kill and unfortunately Islam will never be peaceful.

The fact that "Islam is peaceful" is only illusion, which you want to believe. But Islam is a masochistic religion. The modern Islam is not what is taught in Qur'an, but I am afraid that any time after there are enough Muslims in the world the Sufis will finally conclude that actually unbelievers must be killed and that will be end of all the "peace-delusion" with which we are fed by Muslim jingoists.

## **My reply continues:**

Yes, this was very unpleasant, but I can back up all my arguments if you want.

I wish that all people would be kind and friendly to each other. When I see, that murderers kill saint people, that is really disgusting. Those monks never kill even a mosquito, they never steal, never have sex, never tell a single lie, never drink alcohol, they always speak truth, try to help others etc. Then those with swords come and kill those monks regardless anything. This thing is so disgusting that I think I will vomit. And you would certainly vomit too, if you saw such a massacre. I don't know about any other religion, any other event when a murderers would kill thousands of highly virtuous people. Qur'an must be certainly full of orders for killing if Muslims did such a thing. And this is the only occasion when I think that atheism is better than religion.

Killings done by Muslims are done even today. Maybe you know about the story of Taslima Nasreen, who still cannot come back to her homeland (Bangladesh) because she is threatened to be murdered by Muslims. And there are many other who either were already killed or will be killed soon by those worshipers of A\*. See here:

Quote:

In March 25, 1980 Kauhali-Kalampati Massacre where Bangladesh Army and the Bengali Muslim settlers gunned down 300 Jummas. Banraibari-Beltali-Belchari Massacre, June 26, 1981: - settlers under the protection of the BD Army, murdered hundreds of Jummas. Telafang-Ashalong-Tabalchari Massacre, September 19, 1981: - The BD Army and the Bengali settlers invaded the Jumma villages of Feni valley and murdered hundreds of Jummas. Golakpatimachara -Machyachara -Tarabanchari Massacre, June-August 1983: - The BD Army and the settlers executed month's long campaign against the Jumma villages and murdered 800 Jummas. Bhusanchara Massacre, May 31, 1984 - the massacre was carried out jointly by the 26 Bengal Regiment of the Bangladesh Army and the Bangladeshi settlers. At least 400 Jummas were killed. Many women were gang raped and later shot dead.

<http://jummapeople.net.blogspot.com/> (the article continues with the list of massacres, if you like, you can check the link I gave here)

In my country 59% of people are atheists. There were certainly many attempts to convert them to Islam, but all were unsuccessful, you can guess why - because we know the history of Islam. Islam need a very, very good scholars such as Zakir Naik etc., who will fight against correct understanding Qur'an and make people misunderstand it and think that it is a peaceful book. Indeed, my father was true.

ah, I have found here some good information:

Quote:

Describing the massacres of the latter and the destruction of their viharas, universities, places of worship, the author writes, "The Musalman invaders sacked the Buddhist Universities of Nalanda, Vikramshila, Jagaddala, Odantapuri to name only a few. They raised to the ground Buddhist monasteries with which the country was studded. The monks fled away in thousands to Nepal, Tibet and other places outside India. A very large number were killed outright by the Muslim commanders. How the Buddhist priesthood perished by the sword of the Muslim invaders has been recorded by the Muslim historians themselves. Summarizing the evidence relating to the slaughter of the Buddhist Monks perpetrated by the Musalman General in the course of his invasion of Bihar in 1197 AD, Mr. Vincent Smith says, "...Great quantities of plunder were obtained, and the slaughter of the 'shaven headed Brahmans', that is to say the Buddhist monks, was so thoroughly completed, that when the victor sought for someone capable of explaining the contents of the books in the libraries of the monasteries, not a living man could be found who was able to read them. 'It was discovered,' we are told, 'that the whole of that fortress and city was a college, and in the Hindi tongue they call a college Bihar.' "Such was the slaughter of the Buddhist priesthood perpetrated by the Islamic invaders. The axe was struck at the very root. For by killing the Buddhist priesthood, Islam killed Buddhism. This was the greatest disaster that befell the religion of the Buddha in India...."

<http://arunshourie.voiceofdharma.com/articles/scandal.htm>

But today we are taught, that it was Hindus who removed Buddhism from India. It's false. It was the pseudo-peaceful Muslims killing, murdering, massacring peaceful, virtuous monks. I am really sad.

## **Faisal reacts on my post:**

This is your task to back up any claim/allegation you post against Islam/Muslims. You are the one who should find credible honest sources to obtain information (not me) because you are the one who blindly keep posting nasty lies about Islam from any random source.

Again, I insist that either you provide us with any credible unbiased ACADEMIC historical source that back up this mega-LIE you posted:

Quote:

Over the last 1400 years, 270 million non-believers were murdered by Muslim jihadists.

Islam destroyed the Christian Middle East and Christian North Africa. It is estimated that upwards of 60 million Christians were slaughtered during this conquest.

Also, half the Hindu civilization was annihilated and 80 million Hindus murdered.

Otherwise, you must show your honesty by apologizing to all Muslims here for blindly pasting nasty lies against them.

The ball is in your court. I am not here to play games and to waste my time in refuting silly lies copied from anti-Islam non credible sources.

### **shaileh reacts on my post:**

Phantom, Thanks for presenting very true picture of effects of Muslim invasion in India. Buddhism was literally wiped out by these Muslim invaders. Believe me or not but it is a fact that there were no Muslims in India prior to invasion and today India has the second largest population of Muslims in the world. 99% are converted.

So far it is concerned to Taslima Nasreen. There are many Taslimas around today. A christian professor's hands were chopped off by Muslim fundamentalists in South India only last month because of so called derogatory comments against the prophet. I wish to ask all here. Do you support such ghastly acts of violence? Even if he criticized the Prophet?

### **My reaction to Faisal:**

Quote:

This is your task to back up any claim/allegation you post against Islam/Muslims. You are the one who should find credible honest sources to obtain information (not me) because you are the one who blindly keep posting nasty lies about Islam from any random source.

Again, I insist that either you provide us with any credible unbiased ACADEMIC historical source that back up this mega-LIE you posted

I asked you what do you have against pro-Israels and Zionists. Until you explain why pro-Israels are wrong and Zionists are wrong my beautiful post about 270 million people killed by Muslims (which is not true, because IT IS CERTAINLY MUCH MORE) is credible and I believe it.

As a Muslim you should not discuss with me the number of millions of people killed by Muslims! You should go, collect

your peaceful friend Muslims (if you find at least few hundreds) and go protest to Bangladesh, Iran, Egypt and other countries where non-Muslims are killed and troubled by Muslims and then to Lebanon, Iraq, Yemen, Somalia, Sudan, Pakistan, Turkey and Libya where Muslims are killed (by Muslims). Why don't you, "peaceful" Muslims take your peaceful teaching and approach those bloody Muslims and teach them that they are wrong? Why don't you change anything? Why don't you protest or something? Are you really so ignorant and lazy? Are you really so nasty bad? I am very sad for you. You say that you are peaceful but you do NOTHING for peace. I don't like your peacefulness. Not at all. Whenever I think of you I become extremely sad. Why doesn't this happen when I think of any other religion? Why do all my Buddhist friends lay people and monks as well become extremely said when I mention the word "Islam"? Isn't it strange if you are so peaceful?

In my country when someone says "Islam" we think of "killing". Isn't this strange? Do you think that it is a result of a lie? We are the most atheist country in Europe. Education in our country is one of the best in Europe (for example your friends from Kuwait come to my home-town to learn medicine at our university). Why is it that we make petitions when someone wants to build mosque there? Why is it that I have never seen a Czech Muslim though I am from Czech Republic? I would love to praise your religion, but why don't you do something with the present situation? Why don't you gather your friends and do something about it? I wonder whether there is any Muslim organization propagating equality of people and world-peace. Please, tell me about a single one. I bet that there are hundreds of Christianity and many many other of atheists. In this case I want to emphasize, that Bahaism is the best among monotheisms as it really propagates equality of people and peace. Bahaism is the best monotheistic religion I have ever heard of. If I weren't a Buddhist I would become Bahaist. It is interesting to say, that Bahaism is the second-quickest spreading religion in the world just after Islam. That is the reason why Muslims kill Bahaists and spread everywhere that it is a sectarian religion. May peaceful Muslims eradicate murdering and torturing people done by the masochistic Muslims. May you do it now! Right now!

According to the American and Western thinking pattern, it is to say that all Muslims who (though they do not murder and torture) do not try to stop the murdering by their "brothers" actually participate in those killings. You see, indirectly all Muslims participate in murdering and torturing innocent people, every day. If you don't do anything to stop it, you are not peaceful. Not at all.

## **My answer continues after few days:**

You see? I was probably correct.

This is a very interesting trait of Muslims - when they face real explanation against their religion they are silent. I wonder whether besides the oral silence they would cause also the opposite side silent if they could.

This is therefore the conclusion - Islam is not peaceful, because Muslims do nothing for peace.

I am very sad, that the conclusion is so unfavorable for the Muslims. Or maybe they listened to me and now they try to make the first Muslim organization for establishing peace, first such organization in whole the history of Islam. Bravo! :)

## **Peacerful3 reacts:**

The reason why Muslims stay in silence after a long talk is, because after they try to explain so many things that people just don't want to understand or don't want to accept, Muslims just don't want to argue any more in order not to waste their time. For me, I try to talk to people, especially when they are interested in, but when they just don't listen and keep arguing all

time,I just dont see any reason to keep discussing with them.Because No Muslim is able to make others understand Islam. It's others who have to search,read,listen then decide sincerely. Muslims can just try to explain everything they know in a kind way and then let others choose.

## **My reaction:**

Peaceful3, I am here on the forum quite enough time to know, that when Muslim knows answer he answers even if it is hundred times the same thing.

Islam is not peaceful, it does nothing for peace. It is peaceless.

## **Peaceful3 says:**

Islam is the world's fastest growing religion all around world.

Then people all around world , men and women,young boys and young girls from different colours,races,nationalities are becoming Muslim just to live a peaceless way of life...

If thats what you wanna believe

Okay...

## **Opinion about Islam**

### **I (phantomthewhite) wrote:**

From peaceful:

Quote:

Then If there is still something you can call "violant" or "illogical" I can not do anything with you.Because Islam has nothing to do with violance or oppression.It's just people who wanna believe in it. So otherwise, If you keep blaming what Muslims are doing today,or what they have been doing after last messenger of God,Mohammad you will just drown in your own thoughts which will not bring you anything good.

The problem is, that Islam is very different from other religions. Very different in its attitude towards others and the strength of that attitude. This is the main reason why search in Google for "Allah is Satan" you get so many websites. I did a short research on this topic and it seems that there may be a doubt. Here are two videos quite well explaining the problamatic of Satanism of Qur'an:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PBgTchsi4qA>

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pNoRkZZruu8&feature=related>

Please, Peaceful, I don't know how can you ever think, that non-Muslims cannot have good knowledge about Islam. What about those non-Muslims, who have been erudite scholars and left Islam due to clear understanding of its teaching? I am non-Muslim and you can be sure that there are thousands of Muslims who could learn Islam from me. Yes, I didn't read Qur'an, and I am happy for it. I will read it after I learn about it. I have learned, that better is first learn the explanation of the book and then read it, otherwise the reading is not much fruitful. I learned a lot of Islam by following links in InterPals, by checking Wikipedia and Google for various matters on various religious and non-religious issues. I understood so much just per last two months being here than throughout previous two or three years of self-studying. I have seen quite a good number of Muslim and non-Muslim videos and have read hundreds of websites about Qur'an and Islam from people of "both worlds". And what is the outcome?

Quote:

Islam is a peaceless religion. It is a religion that forgets what is peace and its importance. Before Islam Asia was the continent of peace. After Islam Asia became the continent of war. Three fourths of world conflicts are connected with Muslims. Muslims don't know peace in any manner, because they don't mind only killing non-Muslims, they also kill Muslims, even in the holy month. Muslims have killed 270 million people (by number 270 000 000 people) throughout their history. Though the Muslims know, that they have to be peaceful and that there are still so many serious conflicts caused by them, they do literally NOTHING against it. There is not a single Muslim organization that would have the aim to finish Islamic conflicts. There are atheist, Buddhist and Christian organizations aiming at peace, but there is no such an organization of Islam. However, Muslims should start to do somethings, because in countries such as Bangladesh, Iran, Egypt and other countries where non-Muslims are killed and troubled by Muslims and then in Lebanon, Iraq, Yemen, Somalia, Sudan, Pakistan, Turkey and Libya where Muslims are killed (by Muslims) are those conflicts still and they do not seem to cease.

Islam is either revealed by God or by an alien or by Muhammad's temporal lobes. If it was God, who revealed Islam to Mohammad, then all the other monotheistic religions including Zoroastrianism, Judaism, Christianity and Bahaimism would be revealed by the same God, because their teaching is very similar. However, Islam is different from the other religions because it severely persecutes, kills and massacres the followers of the other "brotherly" faiths. I mean especially Zoroastrianism and Bahaimism. Bahaimism is religion which I accept as the best of monotheistic religions, it is absolutely incomparable with the masochistic nature of Islam.

It can be also, that the monotheistic God is actually a representative of aliens from another planet, who are afraid of us and disguising as Gods (through their developed technology) they may prevent us from attacking them after we eventually develop further. However, in 1950's there was meeting in USA and another in 1974 in France with aliens when they showed their true colors and offered help in spiritual development and if we stop all wars and unite all countries into one-like-country and establish international auxiliary language (which are some of the main aims of Bahaimism) they may help us also with the technical and other development. Thus Islam would be only one of the old revelations which are now completely unrelated to the stage that the civilization has. (In this case I would support and thank for the idea of "reform much like Christianity after Martin Luther" as it was suggested by Norse04.)

Mohammad lived an ascetic life, though there may be a big argument regarding his sexual behavior taking into account his 9 years old wife and his paedophilic behavior towards her mentioned in Qur'an itself. However, regardless this paedophilism we can assume, that he was a kind of honest person. What is very interesting, that he had many of the revelations during seizures. There is a scientific practice of stimulating "temporal lobes" which is a special organ in our head, which leads to various kinds of imagination of a kind very similar to that which had Muhammad. Therefore there may be an assumption, that Muhammad simply during his seizure had an issue with his temporal lobes and as a result of it he was able to do and know things he could not before. This kind of thing can happen also after a perfectly guided or practiced meditation (but that is in much more controlled way). Therefore there may be also assumption, that Muhammad's teaching is simply outcome of his issue with his temporal lobes. I would like to assert, that there are people who are able to get

knowledge which they cannot empirically or rationally get to know. They get their knowledge especially by special kinds of meditation. The Buddha taught various kinds of meditation leading to gaining supernatural knowledge, but he condemned them as not important as the result is impermanent. The Buddha emphasized those kinds of meditation, that lead to understanding the impermanence, suffering and selflessness of the world. This kind of understanding or "enlightenment" is also called Nibbana or Nirvana and it is supposed to be eternal.

To summarize this: Islam is peaceless religion based on outdated teachings. It is a dangerous religion for the world and either it should be changed or given up. If that happens, I would suggest to invalidate all burnings of Qur'an as it may be a good deterrent example of religious thinking. Qur'an may well serve as for example Communist Manifesto, which is possessed by many people as an example of wrong political thinking.

I would like to thank Peaceful3 for replying here, but I would like to inform him that most of his replies have nothing to do with the questions. I spoke with Peaceful3 personally and he is kind and fine person, only he keeps mysterious silence when I ask him about issues that well depict core problems of Islam and offer him not-yet-refuted solutions given either by common sense or the Buddha's teaching. I would like to ask Peaceful3 what has he done for peace, if he selected this nickname. What has he done against slaughters in Bangladesh, Iran, Egypt and other countries where non-Muslims are killed and troubled by Muslims and then in Lebanon, Iraq, Yemen, Somalia, Sudan, Pakistan, Turkey and Libya where Muslims are killed (by Muslims). Thanks for answers.

### **Answer from Peaceful3:**

I dont know what you want me to do ? I am just 18 did you see it? Do you think I can rule Muslims all around world ? "Heeyy, What are you doing you Muslims? Why you kill innocent people ? Dont you read Quran ? Haven't you even read that verse "killing one innocent is like killing all humanity" or havent you ever read life of Prophet Mohammad and his teachings, his kindness to even to all those Jewish people lived with those Muslims in peace?"

I dont have any mean to do sth like that for peace. Therefore I dont know what you expect me to do for peace about what happening in Iran or other countries. It's not fault of Prophet Mohammad or not anything related with Quran, Its just those people who do things according to their own rules.

And I still dont understand why you people keep giving examples about what Muslims have been doing after Islam was already shaped with last messenger Mohammad. How many times I have to repeat that No one has any right to blame Islam according to actions of some people who are called Muslims. If some people from your country do mischief on earth, How can I blame all people in your country or the system in your country as "evil" "bad" "violant". Please open your eyes and read this;;;

If you are honest with yourself and If you are sincerely willing to learn what is Islam ? Just go to a Islamic center If there are any around your place or I can give you some source about Islam to read&listen&watch . Then you will learn a lot about Quran and Life of Prophet Mohammad, How he taught Islam to people, How was his actions towards non-Muslims and aall about it.

But If you will keep trying to learn or rather "blame" Islam in this way

"What about this and that Muslim, Why he is doing that and this? "

I am sorry but Muslims have nothing to discuss with you, because you should go and ask those people who you are talking about, for your answers... Muslims can just answer your questions related with Quran and Life of Last messenger Mohammad. Because Islam is based on this two great source. Muslim's own comments or actions dont have anything to do with "Islam"...

## **Answer from Steelmagnolia:**

hmm this comes from a person who got mad at me when I criticized a sect, a cult which does harm people... It is impossible to say any religion is violent, non peaceful, I mean normal religion, not a sect, not a cult. Islam is a world's recognised religion and I don't know how a person who hasn't read Quran can say it is violent. I tried to read Quran, I looked for explanations from the neutral sources about Islam, also my muslim friends have been explaining me things and from what I got to know about Islam, I came to a conclusion that it is a very nice and peaceful religion.

## **My answer:**

Steelmagnolia, you claim that Islam is a good religion disregarding that in its name 270 millions of people were killed just from its origin until today, where as in the name of Bahaism not only there was not a single person killed (of course) but there is a strong emphasis on unity of all humanity, development of humanity and finishing all wars. You call peaceful religion as a sectarian and the faith of massochists and slaughterers you call religion? Incredible.

Peaceful3, I don't think that you alone can do anything with the ongoing wars. But I thought that you are not the only peaceful Muslim in the world. Are you? ... OK, so, if there are some more peaceful Muslims, why don't you get together and do something to stop Muslim wars? Why atheists, Christians and BUddhists can and you cannot? I tell you why you cannot. Because Allah loves when Muslims are fighting and killing:

Quote:

"Surely Allah loves those who fight in His way as if they were a firm and compact wall"

Qur'an 61:4

Quote:

"Fighting is prescribed for you, and ye dislike it. But it is possible that ye dislike a thing which is good for you, and that ye love a thing which is bad for you. But Allah knoweth, and ye know not."

Quran (2:216)

There is a fatwa given by Osama Bin Laden, that Muslims must kill Americans:

Quote:

To kill the Americans and their allies -- civilians and military -- is an individual duty for every Muslim

He also mentioned in his fatwa:

Quote:

Allah, the most exalted said: {and -so far- those who are slain in the way of Allah, He will by no means allow their deeds to perish. He will guide them and improve their condition. and cause them to enter the garden -paradise- which He has made known to them}. (Muhammad; 47:4-6)

From the book Behind the Veil:

Quote:

One of Muhammad's popular claims is that God commanded him to fight people until they become Muslims and carry out the ordinances of Islam. All Muslim scholars without exception agree on this. Muhammad said:

"I have been ordered by God to fight with people till they bear testimony to the fact that there is no God but Allah and that Mohammed is his messenger, and that they establish prayer and pay Zakat (money). If they do it, their blood and their property are safe from me" (see Bukhari Vol. I, p. 13).

Scholars understood this claim to mean the waging of offensive wars against unbelievers in order to force them to embrace Islam as individuals or communities. This is exactly what Muhammad himself did in carrying out God's commandment to him.

Quote:

Many provocative and painful events were inflicted on individuals and tribes in the course of Muhammad's life. Muhammad, as we will see, used to exhort his followers:

"Invitation first (that is, call them first to embrace Islam). If they refuse, then war."

In other words, he told his followers not to kill anybody unless you first invite him to embrace Islam. Only if he rejects it, must he be killed. This is evident in the story of Abu Sufyan:

When Muhammad and his followers were about to attack Mecca to subjugate it to Islam, his adherents arrested Abu Sufyan, one of Mecca's inhabitants. They brought him to Muhammad. Muhammad told him: "Woe to you, O Abu Sufyan. Is it not time for you to realize that there is no God but the only God?" Abu Sufyan answered: "I do believe that." Muhammad then said to him: "Woe to you, O Abu Sufyan. Is it not time for you to know that I am the apostle of God?" Abu Sufyan answered: "By God, O Muhammad, of this there is doubt in my soul." The 'Abbas who was present with Muhammad told Abu Sufyan: "Woe to you! Accept Islam and testify that Muhammad is the apostle of God before your neck is cut off by the sword." Thus he professed the faith of Islam and became a Muslim.

There are many sources which record this story:

- Ibn Hisham, part 4, p. 11 ("Biography of the Prophet")
- "The Chronicle of the Tabari", part 2, p. 157
- Ibn Kathir, "The Prophetic Biography", part 3, p. 549, and "The Beginning and the End"
- Ibn Khaldun, the rest of part 2, p. 43 and on
- Al-Sira al-Halabiyya, Vol. 3. p. 18

° Al Road Al Anf, part 4, p. 90, by Al Sohaily

Quote:

{so when you meet in battle those who disbelieve, then smite the necks.....} (Muhammad; 47:19).

Here are some short excerpts from what happens in Afghanistan from "World Conflicts Today":

Quote:

After initially welcoming Taliban fighters as restorers of order, many Afghan citizens came to resent the Taliban government. Particularly in the cities, Afghans objected to the dress code that required women to conceal themselves inside burkas and men to grow long beards; to the bans on popular forms of entertainment like kite-flying, music, and chess; and to the harsh regime of punishments that included amputations for theft, stonings for adultery, and lashings for any behavior deemed immoral by the Department of the Promotion of Virtue and Prevention of Vice (the Taliban's powerful religious police force).

Quote:

Consequently, the new government struggled to provide basic services but succeeded in imposing the strictest Islamic laws, or sharia, in the world. Among the most invasive aspects of the sharia were amputations for thieves and lethal stonings for adulterers; mandatory burkas for women and long beards for men; an indefinite ban on education for girls; and blanket prohibitions against chess, kite-flying, music, and practically all other forms of entertainment. Compliance with all these laws was monitored and enforced by the Taliban's notorious religious police, the Department of the Promotion of Virtue and Prevention of Vice (DPVPV).

Quote:

In an attempt to shore up Karzai's government, the international community agreed to the Afghan Compact in January 2006. Essentially a road map for Afghanistan, the Compact laid out a path to security, good governance, economic reform, and the destruction of the opium trade.

2009 March

Quote:

A law reported to legalize rape within marriage and require married women to receive their husband's permission before leaving the house is passed in Afghanistan.

2010 August

Quote:

A law authorizing a man to withhold food from a wife who withholds sex goes into force.

<http://www.thereligionofpeace.com/Quran/023-violence.htm>

Quote:

"As to those who reject faith, I will punish them with terrible agony in this world and in the Hereafter, nor will they have anyone to help."

Quran (3:56)

Quote:

Quran (4:95) - "Not equal are those believers who sit (at home) and receive no hurt, and those who strive and fight in the cause of Allah with their goods and their persons. Allah hath granted a grade higher to those who strive and fight with their goods and persons than to those who sit (at home). Unto all (in Faith) Hath Allah promised good: But those who strive and fight Hath He distinguished above those who sit (at home) by a special reward,-"

This passage criticizes "peaceful" Muslims who do not join in the violence, letting them know that they are less worthy in Allah's eyes. It also demolishes the modern myth that "Jihad" doesn't mean holy war in the Quran, but rather a spiritual struggle. Not only is the Arabic word used in this passage, but it is clearly not referring to anything spiritual, since the physically disabled are given exemption. (The Hadith reveals the context of the passage to be in response to a blind man's protest that he is unable to engage in Jihad and this is reflected in other translations of the verse).

Quote:

Quran (8:12) - "I will cast terror into the hearts of those who disbelieve. Therefore strike off their heads and strike off every fingertip of them"

No reasonable person would interpret this to mean a spiritual struggle.

So, now do you understand the true nature of "Islam"?

### **Answer from Peaceful3:**

My friend, as a person who never read Quran (you told it by yourself) how can you make such brave comments without searching "When and Why" this verses were revealed. You get it like those verses were sent to people today?

You just don't want to understand Quran is a universal message to human kind from 1400 years ago till end of world but It was also a message to last messenger Mohammad as well which means, these all verses about fight and war were sent 1400 years ago for specific cases. Haven't you ever studied wars that Prophet Mohammad got involved in?

If you haven't or if you did from some "Anti-Islamic" sources, I can try to find you good sources to learn...

But since, I have been reading your all posts on this forum about "Islam", it's like your intention is not to learn something, but you just try to misguide people according to your own thoughts "Islam is peaceless "

"Islam is violence" , "Don't embrace Islam".. This is only thing I could observe from your posts. Just know that no matter how much you try, Islam has been spreading so fast for 1400 years and will keep spreading this fast no matter how much people try to misguide others...

Don't worry about it, God helps those who want to be guided. You can just increase the hatred of those who already think like you and deny Allah (one God) and his messengers.

### **Answer from II\_Faisal\_II:**

To All readers, please notice that this member 'phantom' who wrote the above false claims/lies out of blind hate towards Islam is the SAME PERSON who when I asked him in another thread the following question:

Quote:

My Question was: Suppose -God forbids- that one of the criminals broke into your house, and massacred your wife and raped her then killed your child, will you LOVE HIM, WILL YOU FORGIVE HIM and let him go without punishment !!!!?

As I understood from your replay, your answer is as follows:

Q: will you LOVE HIM? .... your answer: YES.

Q: WILL YOU FORGIVE HIM and let him go without punishment !!!!? ... your answer: YES.

Please correct me if I misunderstood your answers!

And his answer was:

Quote:

Dear Faisal, you are absolutely correct. I would wish him to be happy, satisfied, live long life let him go without any punishment. Have you heard about something like "forgiveness"?

Also he is the same person who started lecturing us about how his Buddhism faith (which he claims to strongly believe in) preaches unconditional love, forgiveness and peace by saying (I quote) :

Quote:

There is also this famous verse given by the Buddha:

"Hatred never ceases by hatred in this world. By love alone they cease. This is an ancient Law."  
(Dhammapada, 1,5)

Check my question to him and his complete answer here <http://www.interpals.net/phpBB/viewtopic.php?t=33948&postdays=0&postorder=asc&start=10>

This is just to show you the bald-faced contradiction, hybocrciy and lie some people live in, and they want to fool us with it.

...

## **My answer to II\_Faisal\_II:**

Dear Faisal, I just expressed my conclusion. The fact that I wish all beings to be happy is not at all contradictory to the fact, that I understand Islam as a peaceless, retarded religion.

## **Read about Buddhism**

### **White101 wrote:**

I knew some e-pals have read books related Buddhism through an e-mail exchanging. for example Tibetan Buddhism. I learnt about "Lotus Sutra".

-Lotus Sutra-

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lotus\\_Sutra](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lotus_Sutra)

Have you read books related Buddhism?

### **I answered:**

Hello,

Lotus Sutra is from quite later date, it is dated to 10th or 11th century AC. I would suggest that you read some of the original writings, such as Tipitaka (you can get a good collection of English translations in [www.accesstoinsight.org/](http://www.accesstoinsight.org/) . A very good book about Buddhism is "Buddha and His Teachings" from Narada Maha Thera. It is online here: <http://www.buddhism.org/Sutras/BuddhaTeachings/> - this is one of the best books related to Buddhism I've ever read. I think if Muslims and ChrisShiva read this book they may understand something from the true Buddha's teaching.

Tipitaka, the collection of the Buddha's discourses is about forty times larger than Qur'an, so I don't suggest you to read it whole, that would take you few years. However, here are many parts, which are available online and which may be beneficial for you if you just start with studying Buddhism. I think that these ten may be quite essential for your understanding of Buddhism:

1. Sigalovada Sutta - <http://www.accesstoinsight.org/tipitaka/dn/dn.31.0.nara.html>
2. Mahaparinibbana Sutta - <http://www.accesstoinsight.org/tipitaka/dn/dn.16.1-6.vaji.html>
3. Brahmajala Sutta - <http://www.purifymind.com/Suttas1.htm>
4. Samannaphala Sutta - <http://www.accesstoinsight.org/tipitaka/dn/dn.02.0.than.html>
5. Dhammapada - <http://web.ukonline.co.uk/buddhism/verses.htm> (only verses), for the commentaries you can read <http://web.ukonline.co.uk/buddhism/dmpada.htm> - but that is a huge amount of reading, so count on your time
6. Ariyapariyesana Sutta - <http://www.accesstoinsight.org/tipitaka/mn/mn.026.than.html>

7. Brahmaya Sutta - <http://www.dhammadownload.com/Tipitaka/read.php?id=125>
8. Catuma Sutta - <http://dhammadownload.com/Tipitaka/read.php?id=101>
9. Bahiya Sutta - <http://www.accesstoinsight.org/tipitaka/kn/ud/ud.1.10.than.html>
10. Mahosadha Jataka - <http://www.sacred-texts.com/bud/j6/j6012.htm>

The Tipitaka is not a holy book nor a holy writing and I have never heard that Buddha would tell anything like that. The Buddha gave various teachings to various people according to the peoples' dispositions, so if another person reads teaching for another person it may not be suitable. Thus we have to read the Tipitaka and see what is suitable for us - that is easy - because those things that are not suitable simply cannot be understood by us. But Buddhism is not about theory and about learning or studying, that is not the way to enlightenment. Buddhism is about three things: virtue (sila), meditation (samadhi) and wisdom (panna). That's it.

The Tipitaka is collection of various explanations on various topics which are not related to the core of the Buddha's teaching. It is important to understand, that the Buddha taught the way to enlightenment, not cause of earthquake or history of humankind. The path to enlightenment is the core of the Buddha's teaching and that teaching he gave is certainly correct regarding the fact, that there are enlightened people in the world even today. Read the tevijja-vacchagotta sutta and learn, that the Buddha himself said, that he is not all-knowing and those who say it about him are blaming him that way. Buddha had three knowledges of which only one is the important - the knowledge of eradication defilement (and thus attaining enlightenment).

The links to discourses that I have given above are not for converting someone to Buddhism, not at all. Rather if you are a Buddhist you may think well whether Buddhism is the right religion for you after reading them and if you are not a Buddhist you may well learn the true nature of Buddhism including its pros and cons. Knowing the pros and cons of Buddhism, realizing mistakes and troubles that are in Buddhism I studied many other religions. Out of the world religions that we can easily learn about, Buddhism seems to me the best and Bahaism would be on the second place. I suggest everyone to learn religions unbiasedly, from the followers and from those who criticize it. I suggest everyone to learn to become in mind (as a test) the "follower" and the "non-follower" of the particular studied religion regardless the present situation - that is the way how I test whether this or that religion would suit my heart and mind.

## **Say that Islam is peaceful or else ... !**

### **My (phanotmthewhite's) essay no. 1:**

I wish to discuss whether Islam is peaceful. Here is an enriched partial copy of a post that I have written in another topic. Please, Muslims, defend Islam's peace. However, I am afraid, that you will never be able to do it.

- Throughout history in the name of Allah, the merciful, there were 270 000 000 people slaughtered.
- Unlike in Christianity (thanks Jesus), the slaughter and massacre of people by Muslims continues even today.
- Three fourths of present world conflicts are connected with Muslims.
- There is a (probably) not a single peace-making organization established by Muslims to stop those conflicts. However, there are many established by atheists, Christians, Baha'i followers and Buddhists.

Quote:

"Surely Allah loves those who fight in His way as if they were a firm and compact wall"

Qur'an 61:4

Quote:

"Fighting is prescribed for you, and ye dislike it. But it is possible that ye dislike a thing which is good for you, and that ye love a thing which is bad for you. But Allah knoweth, and ye know not."

Quran (2:216)

There is a fatwa (judgment) given by Osama Bin Laden, that Muslims must kill Americans:

Quote:

To kill the Americans and their allies -- civilians and military -- is an individual duty for every Muslim

He also mentioned in his fatwa (judgment):

Quote:

Allah, the most exalted said: {and -so far- those who are slain in the way of Allah, He will by no means allow their deeds to perish. He will guide them and improve their condition. and cause them to enter the garden -paradise- which He has made known to them}. (Muhammad; 47:4-6)

From the book Behind the Veil:

Quote:

One of Muhammad's popular claims is that God commanded him to fight people until they become Muslims and carry out the ordinances of Islam. All Muslim scholars without exception agree on this. Muhammad said:

"I have been ordered by God to fight with people till they bear testimony to the fact that there is no God but Allah and that Mohammed is his messenger, and that they establish prayer and pay Zakat (money). If they do it, their blood and their property are safe from me" (see Bukhari Vol. I, p. 13).

Scholars understood this claim to mean the waging of offensive wars against unbelievers in order to force them to embrace Islam as individuals or communities. This is exactly what Muhammad himself did in carrying out God's commandment to him.

Quote:

Many provocative and painful events were inflicted on individuals and tribes in the course of Muhammad's life. Muhammad, as we will see, used to exhort his followers:

"Invitation first (that is, call them first to embrace Islam). If they refuse, then war."

In other words, he told his followers not to kill anybody unless you first invite him to embrace Islam. Only if he rejects it, must he be killed. This is evident in the story of Abu Sufyan:

When Muhammad and his followers were about to attack Mecca to subjugate it to Islam, his adherents arrested Abu Sufyan, one of Mecca's inhabitants. They brought him to Muhammad. Muhammad told him: "Woe to you, O Abu Sufyan. Is it not time for you to realize that there is no God but the only God?" Abu Sufyan answered: "I do believe that." Muhammad then said to him: "Woe to you, O Abu Sufyan. Is it not time for you to know that I am the apostle of God?" Abu Sufyan answered: "By God, O Muhammad, of this there is doubt in my soul." The 'Abbas who was present with Muhammad told Abu Sufyan: "Woe to you! Accept Islam and testify that Muhammad is the apostle of God before your neck is cut off by the sword." Thus he professed the faith of Islam and became a Muslim.

There are many sources which record this story:

- Ibn Hisham, part 4, p. 11 ("Biography of the Prophet")
- "The Chronicle of the Tabari", part 2, p. 157
- Ibn Kathir, "The Prophetic Biography", part 3, p. 549, and "The Beginning and the End"
- Ibn Khaldun, the rest of part 2, p. 43 and on
- Al-Sira al-Halabiyya, Vol. 3. p. 18
- Al Road Al Anf, part 4, p. 90, by Al Sohaily

Quote:

{so when you meet in battle those who disbelieve, then smite the necks.....} (Muhammad; 47:19).

Here are some short excerpts from what happens in Afghanistan from "World Conflicts Today":

Quote:

After initially welcoming Taliban fighters as restorers of order, many Afghan citizens came to resent the Taliban government. Particularly in the cities, Afghans objected to the dress code that required women to conceal themselves inside burkas and men to grow long beards; to the bans on popular forms of entertainment like kite-flying, music, and chess; and to the harsh regime of punishments that included amputations for theft, stonings for adultery, and lashings for any behavior deemed immoral by the Department of the Promotion of Virtue and Prevention of Vice (the Taliban's powerful religious police force).

Quote:

Consequently, the new government struggled to provide basic services but succeeded in imposing the strictest Islamic laws, or sharia, in the world. Among the most invasive aspects of the sharia were amputations for thieves and lethal stonings for adulterers; mandatory burkas for women and long beards for men; an indefinite ban on education for girls; and blanket prohibitions against chess, kite-flying, music, and practically all other forms of entertainment. Compliance with all these laws was monitored and enforced by the Taliban's notorious religious police, the Department of the Promotion of Virtue and Prevention of Vice (DPVPV).

Quote:

In an attempt to shore up Karzai's government, the international community agreed to the Afghan Compact in January 2006. Essentially a road map for Afghanistan, the Compact laid out a path to security, good governance, economic reform, and the destruction of the opium trade.

2009 March

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No reasonable person would interpret this to mean a spiritual struggle.

## **After some reactions I reacted:**

From Peaceful3:

Quote:

But I think many people already had a lot discussions with you on this forum which didnt end up anywhere. Because you just keep doing what media is doing "Look at this Muslims they are terrorist" and all other stuff. Is that why still thousands are becoming Muslim every other day?

There was never ever an appearance of the word "terrorist" in my posts. If there was, please, show it to me. I have never ever said, that Muslims are terrorists. I never said it. Never. So, please, do not misinterpret (even indirectly) what I speak about. Nobody knows what actually terrorism is and as such it is a very misleading term. Misleading terms should never be used in valuable discussions. This is what Wikipedia says about terrorism:

"It is not only individual agencies within the same governmental apparatus that cannot agree on a single definition of terrorism. Experts and other long-established scholars in the field are equally incapable of reaching a consensus."

People become muslims because the converters don't mind lying and deceiving those people. I know a former Buddhist monk, who is now Muslim. Do you know what he told me? He said, that the Buddha's teaching is today misinterpreted, and that it is well taught in Islam. If that is so, at least the core of the teachings would be same, or at least some parts would be same. Thus I asked him where is kamma in Islam. He didn't know answer. Where is Nibbana in Islam. He didn't know the answer. Where is impermanence, suffering and selflessness in Islam. He didn't know answer. He was cheated and deceived. And I was also cheated and deceived when a highly, really highly educated Muslims tried to convert me to Islam. I have revealed all their deceptions and understood the real nature of Islam thanks to them. I never thought before those discussions that Islam would be a not-good or violent religion. However, after their explanation, after explanation of educated Muslims, genuine Muslims, I had hard time to find peace in Islam. Then I started to study Islam even more. After very deep study especially connected with discussions and learning from genuine Muslims and Muslim scholars I understood, that Islam is a completely peaceless religion. This is what I learned from Muslims, not from non-Muslims (though non-Muslims are not opposed to it).

From Peaceful3:

Quote:

You can keep blaming Islam in this way, but believe me, you can not misguide those who Allah will guide...

Quran 3:54 (from [http://www.wikiislam.net/wiki/Allah\\_the\\_best\\_Deceiver](http://www.wikiislam.net/wiki/Allah_the_best_Deceiver) )

Quote:

ومكروا ومكر الله والله خير الماكرين

And they cheated/deceived and God cheated/deceived, and God (is) the best (of) the cheaters/deceivers.

Quran 8:30 ibid

Quote:

واذ يمكر بك الذين كفروا ليثبتوك او يقتلوك او يخرجوك ويمكرون ويمكر الله والله خير الماكرين

And when those who disbelieved deceive/scheme at you to affix/affirm you, or kill you, or bring you out, and they scheme/deceive , and God deceives/schemes and God (is) best (of) the deceivers/schemers.

Qur'an 8:43-44 ibid

Quote:

إِذْ يُرِيكَهُمُ اللَّهُ فِي مَتَابِكَ قَلِيلًا وَلَوْ أَرَاكَهُمْ كَثِيرًا لَفَشِلْتُمْ وَلَتَنَرَعِيْنَهُمْ فِي الْأَمْرِ وَلَكِنَّ اللَّهَ سَلِيمٌ إِنَّهُ عَلِيمٌ بِدَاتِ الصُّدُورِ - وَإِذْ يُرِيكُمُوهُمْ إِذِ التَّفَيُّنِمْ فِي أَعْيُنِكُمْ قَلِيلًا وَيُقَلِّلُكُمْ فِي أَعْيُنِهِمْ لِيَقْضِيَ اللَّهُ أَمْرًا كَانَ

## مَفْعُولًا وَإِلَى اللَّهِ تُرْجَعُ الْأُمُورُ

When Allah showed them to you in your dream as few; and if He had shown them to you as many you would certainly have become weak-hearted and you would have disputed about the matter, but Allah saved (you); surely He is the Knower of what is in the breasts. And when He showed them to you, when you met, as few in your eyes and He made you to appear little in their eyes, in order that Allah might bring about a matter which was to be done, and to Allah are all affairs returned.

Qur'an 13.27

[quote]"The Unbelievers say: "Why is not a Sign sent down to him from his Lord?" Say: "Truly Allah leaveth, to stray\*, whom He will; but he guideth to Himself those who turn to Him in penitence."

Qur'an 16.93

"If Allah so willed, He could make you all one People: but He leaves straying whom He pleases,\*\* and He guides whom He pleases: but ye shall certainly be called to account for all your actions."

Qur'an 2.7

"Allah hath set a seal on their hearts and on their hearing, and on their eyes is a veil; great is the penalty they (incur)."

Qur'an 35.8

"Is he, then, to whom the evil of his conduct is made alluring, so that he looks upon it as good, (equal to one who is rightly guided)? For Allah leaves to stray whom He wills, and guides whome He wills. So let not thy soul go out in (vainly) sighing after them: for Allah knows well all that they do!"

Qur'an 74.31

"... Thus doth Allah leave to stray whom He pleaseth; and guide whom He pleaseth; and none can know the forces of thy Lord, except He. ..."

So, the Allah will deceive and lead me astray according to his wish and according to his wish he will torture me in the most possible masochistic way after I die. Why? Because he likes to do. He lets deceived those, whom He likes to be deceived. However, how do you know, that you are not the one, who is led astray? Maybe it is you, who is led astray and me, who is correct.

If I blame Islam, I blame it based upon facts. Not upon assumption. If you protect Islam, may it be also based upon facts. OK?

\*The translation of the arabic word "yodel" here is incorrect. It is not "to stray" but "to deceive". The Allah deceives those, who he wills. Allah is deceiver. But according to my knowledge, it is Satan who is deceiver. Thus it is clear, that Allah is evidently Satan, because it is Satan who deceives. One of the Allah's 99 names is "al mudel", which means "the deceiver". (Taken from here )

\*\*First the Allah chooses whom he deceives, and then whom he guides. In Surah four there is written, that Jesus was not crucified. It is written, that the Allah made someone to look like if Jesus is on the cross, but actually Jesus was not crucified - according to this Surah. As such, Allah was deceiving. Whom? The Jewish, Romans and the followers of Jesus Christ.

Your Allah really seems to be Satan. The God would never deceive, cheat or lie like Allah did. (Taken from here )

From II\_Faisal\_II:

Quote:

This is just to show you the bald-faced contradiction, hypocrisy and lie some people live in, and they want to fool us with it.

I don't know where you see contradiction. I told you, that if someone kills my child and rapes my wife, I am able to wish him to be happy. However, when I think of that some group of Islamically mad people killed thousands of virtuous people, then I am very sad. Not angry. I am very sad. According to Buddhism those people will suffer billions and billions in hell for their actions (but not longer than their actions deserve; unlike it is with Islam where for just denying belief in Allah/Satan you are going to be burnt in hell forever regardless your other actions). As those people will suffer anyway, I don't need to cause any more suffering to them. If I myself cause them suffering (even in defense) it is another bad action, in this case done by me, and it is me who will suffer for that. But I am afraid that your Islam-limited thinking is unable to understand the law of kamma.

Why I make topics like this here? Because I want people to understand the truth. I am not killing or harming Muslims by saying truth. They may feel harmed, but that is caused by their own mental disorder, not by my physical action. I aim at searching the truth. If you don't want to search for the truth, you should not pretend it. And, moreover, I wish all Muslims to be happy and contented.

I wish all beings to be happy and live long time, I wish all beings to have what they need and to stay with good people. I wish all beings to be satisfied and be healthy. And I wish the same thing to you, Faisal, the same thing to the Muslim masochists in Bangladesh and other countries, to my father, to my meditation teacher and to me as well. I don't see any difference among people, we all are able to attain enlightenment and we all have good qualities.

By this post and other posts I want to ignite your effort to explain and elucidate the problems that I show. Sometimes I show the problems in a very direct way, but that is the thing about discussion. Have you ever seen that I would use harsh words? That I would use lies? That I would not react on the things that I am asked to react on? I think you didn't. Therefore there is no possibility to criticize me. Search for truth is very important and if you don't like me to search for truth, then it is a sign that you have some hidden intentions.

From steelmagnolia:

Quote:

Buddhists are peaceful and forgiving why do you show all this hatred towards Islam and then say you don't? This is my question to the author of this topic. you claim you could forgive your abusers but seems you can't be tolerant towards other religion and wrap your hatred in nice words...

I don't feel hatred towards Islam. I feel that something should be done. I didn't feel any hatred towards Islam, so I don't know how could I ever wrap it or not wrap it into nice words. I feel extremely sad and I feel that something should be done. By writing here I do my best to make the Muslims think about the importance of action against the issues which emerged due to the blind faith that they also follow. As monks we have one practice that is common to all monks - watch ourselves. We watch not our body, but our mind. I watch my mind quite well and I really didn't perceive any hatred there when writing these posts. Maybe you have misunderstood some things that I have said. Though I ridicule, explain, elucidate and refute (which are all the things that the Buddha himself did when it was beneficial), I never tell lies, never tell harsh words and never deceive. Those are rules that I never break.

Anyway, unlike you, I question religions based on facts. You question religions based on hearsay. I don't consider questioning religions (based on fact) as anything wrong.

From la\_Turca:

Quote:

according to Koran it means you shouldnt sit to be slapped in the face when they attack you defend yourself otherwise you'll be vaporized off earth by others. just like big powers are trying to take control of other countries by kinda ways in this century. guess who goes and invades countries of others. muslims?

Islam attacked dozens of countries, it is the religion of invasion and attacking. Here are just some of them - Afghanistan, Pakistan, India and many, many others. I hope that you had some (unbiased) history lessons at school, if yes, you would be able to make the list of the invaded countries three or four times longer.

How is it that Zoroastrianism, Bahaism, Taoism, Buddhism and other religions didn't need to defend themselves by bloody wars? How is it that those religions could and Islam can't? It sounds like Islam is not as good as those religions. I think you should reconsider and recalculate your attitude towards religions. Islam is one of the most bloody reasons for wars in the history, I would believe that actually the number 1 in its massochism and slaughter of innocent people. Why Islam could be that way bloody and other religions not?

Quote:

and about comparison of casualties by religions, i'll strongly advise you search about christian violence history in europe, africa and asia.

As I explained in the introduction, Christianity is not involved in conflicts today, unlike it is with Islam. Christians understood that the Jesus' teaching is teaching of peace. They understood it because the Bible is not so much misleading. However, Qur'an is so much killing-liking, that even today three fourths of world conflicts are caused by Islam. Christianity is not involved in world conflicts today, though it was in the past - that means, that the Christians understood something. However, Islam was always involved in wars already since its inception (and Christianity was not involved in wars during Jesus or even long time after him). You see? Unlike Christianity, Islam is war from its beginning to its end.

From la\_Turca:

Quote:

could you show me where i said his post was intolerant and hatred? no intolerance but ignorance. i explained why.

i'm fine in my strong faith. no angry response to him, what made you think like that? i kindly asked him questions and awaiting. isnt this my right?

I think you misunderstood. You were shown as the good example. She/he(?) explained that your reaction was calm and fine, whereas the reactions of the other Muslims were not appropriate.

From Ylenka\_1988:

Quote:

Islam is most peacefull and tolerant religion only in Mekka

Even in Mekka there is no tolerance. Yes, you want to indicate that there are only Muslims and as such there is peace. However, regarding the fact that non-Muslims are strictly prohibited to enter Mecca and Medina we can understand, that Islam is the last tolerant religion in the world. I wonder what would Muslims do if the sacred sites of the Buddha such as Bihar in India were prohibited to them. Oh, that would be a cause for another bloody war. Anyway, I would like to mention, that it was Muslims who came to India and destroyed many of sacred sites of Buddhism and Hinduism. Islam is the most intolerant religion I have ever heard of.

Arya said in June 21, 2010 at 9:25 AM in <http://agniveer.com/1121/rapid-islam/?cid=3137> :

Quote:

@Proud to be a Kafir

Brother, it was expected. Islam is the most coward cult, world has ever seen. They dont allow non muslim preachers in their countries to propagate their religion but cry for freedom of speech in non muslim states!

From choukaze:

Quote:

I love watching such debates on youtube because the Muslim is the one who always speaks with a calm, clear voice using logic and reasoning, whereas the Christian just uses emotions and only emotions to appeal to your emotions.

If you knew something about discussion, you would know also that always the winner is peaceful and usually the defeated one is angry. You can see a highly educated discussion of Muslim scholar with an atheist (former Christian Priest) here: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tlaEPERULhc> . Though I don't feel that atheism would be "the good path", from this video it is clear, that atheism is definitely more developed way of thinking than Islam. Please, watch the video before you comment this.

From joneswk:

Quote:

An exponentially larger number of Muslims have not killed anyone and do not wish to do so.

This is not the matter. The matter is, that Muslims don't try to stop killing done by their brothers. By their non-action they indirectly participate in killings done by their brothers. Why Christians, atheists, Buddhists, Bahaists etc. can try to stop killing done by others but Muslims can't? If Islam was a peaceful religion, it would do something for peace. Islam does nothing for peace. That's the matter. One of the main purposes for making this kind of forum threads is to incite Muslims who come here to do something with the present situation. I may be not successful, but maybe I may be. Whatever the result may be, at least I learn something about Islam.[/url]

**What do you not like about your religion**

## **Aristostomias wrote:**

Since nothing is perfect (probably), I'd like to know what kind of annoying flaws people find in their own religion/ (religious) beliefs. Embarrassingly uninformed atheist pals being too vocal? The fundies driving you up the wall? Did karma place dog poop under your best pair of shoes? Too many pedophiles leading your church? God stood you up -- again? Confession time Wink .

As an atheist, I find it somewhat annoying that I can't proclaim that no gods exist. I lack any kind of religious conviction or feeling that there is any kind of deity; instead, I have this feeling that there most certainly is no god, that it would violate some cosmic aesthetic rule of the empty universe if there was. And yet rationally I know I have no reason to believe so, to proclaim that belief. How could I know that there is no god, no flying spaghetti monster nor any teapot flying around between Jupiter and Mars? (well, maybe some day we'll know the last one for sure Laughing )

Another thing that's annoying about atheism that I can't really even disbelieve all god claims. So Justin Bieber is your god (chuckle (chuckle (chuckle) OK, if that's your definition of a god then I must admit gods exist. (headbang)

Next up in the list is the fact that there aren't more of us. Come on, world, throw away the shackles of religion (ninja) Laughing.

The most annoying thing about atheism must be that one can never prove that there are no gods. Proving that a god exists is simple enough: put him on some late night talk show ( (makeup) (~) ) to work his magic ( (heidy) => Cloppy the cow ). Proving that there are no gods is just plain impossible; there's no way I'll ever be proven right Crying or Very sad.

## **Peaceful3 wrote:**

If there were things that wouldnt make any sense to me,or If there were things like which would be against human nature,mentality , I wouldnt fallow the path that I am fallowing today,because If your religion that you are fallowing today dont make sense to you,you should think that there is something wrong with it.Just man made religions would have problems whereas a religion from God should be perfect.So you(for those who think there is sth wrong) should go and search for a better,realistic religion.

For me,I couldnt find any other one, So...

## **athena\_hp1 wrote:**

Hmm, what I "hate" about being a Christian?

1) It seems I HAVE to know the Bible like the back of my hand and/or have "scientific proof" to get any recognition. Truth is, I don't. I just have my testimony, but no one is willing to listen to "sappy" stories anymore.

2) I have to claim a "religion" to be a Christian. I don't have a set of beliefs or ideas made up by some random people and shaped over generations to prove my love for my God, nor will I ever adopt one.

3) Once most people hear that I'm Christian, they assume all these things about me, including me being extremely close-minded and that I was "taught" to believe. I've questioned and have had my share of challenges... But that sort of ties into the first point.

4) I'm expected to act a "certain" way all the time... Although I'm a girl, I openly admit I'm perverted and love dirty jokes. I love racist jokes, and I have a rather "cruel" way of showing people I love them. I listen to all types of music, including songs that question the existence of God. And I hate Christian rock and most Gospel music. I really do... But I'm human. I think listening to a little "disapproving" music as a heck of a lot better than hating someone different than me, which is what a lot of Christians do.

Oh, and the fact I prefer animals to humans any day is "un-Christian" most times as well.

5) Extreme Christians and converters giving other Christians a bad name... But most Texans are extreme in their beliefs, whatever they may be, so it's expected here. :D

As for you proving there is no god... The proof could pop up sooner than you know. Wink

### **Aristostomias reacts to Peaceful3:**

In my humble opinion, if you honestly cannot find anything wrong with your religion, you're not trying hard enough, or you're dangerously ignorant of your religion -- deluded, even. Even if your religion were perfect, its practitioners aren't. The doctrines of every religion can be twisted. I'm not asking only about the doctrine: people, traditions, clarity of scripture, expectations, etc. Anything you think that could be improved about your religion, religious beliefs, or the people adhering to them.

### **Calmlikeabomb99:**

The only thing i dont like about my Religion is the fact that some members are disgusting and give a bad name for the whole Church. Not every Catholic Priest is a pedophile, its just a few disgusting fools. What, its not possible that a few evil people are able to pose as good people?

### **Greg3001 wrote:**

I guess the issue I have is the fact many Christians have tried to use the Bible and the faith generally to endorse views on ethical and social issues which are backward and retrogressive, from trying to ban gay marriage to banning legalised abortion and access to contraception. I also dislike a lot of the hatred and intolerance I see Christians show to other Christians, particularly those who belong to a different denomination. I have seen Catholics show a lot of venom for other Catholics who have views which differ from their own or the official line of the church (supporting legal abortion for example or the right of a couple to use artificial contraceptives) and I have also frequently seen nasty spats between Christians of all denominations about which group is the 'true' church. This also extends to the heartlessness and hostility Christians often show to non-Christians, whether religious or not.

Another issue I dislike is the way many Christians reject the findings of modern science, especially 'creationists' who argue absurdities like Earth and universe being 10,000 years old, which is overwhelmingly contradicted by the scientific evidence.

The hostility to the theory of evolution is another thing I don't like.

A further criticism I have of Christianity is church leaders often show little accountability for wrongdoing and evils, especially done by their own ministers towards the most vulnerable. The Catholic Church's protection of priests in favour of victims in the sex abuse scandals is a terrible reflection on the church's moral credibility and its own persistent unwillingness to accept responsibility for mistakes made by its leaders. Trying to hide behind a magical cloak of 'infallibility' in matters of faith and morals just makes the issue more scandalous in my view.

A final, related issue is the unwillingness of church leaders to change views which cause misery and hardship. The persistent opposition to artificial contraceptive use by the Roman Catholic church for example, and also the persistent attempts to stifle recognition of gay rights by many churches, are bad reflections on the churches themselves.

### **Peaceful3 replies to aristostomias:**

I am not ignorant at all,my mate.But unfortunately,I might agree with you about "its practitioners aren't"...

### **Aristostomias replies to Peaceful3:**

That's what I mean; there are downsides to almost everything (feel free to expound on them Wink ). Personally I think it can be very dangerous (for you, or for others) if you can't identify the weak points or shortcomings of something, and especially dangerous if you think that something is perfect. I think many cults think of their societies as perfect, and cults can be very harmful. Another thing might be alternative medicine: if it has no side effects (=shortcomings), does it have any actual effects either? Anything that is above criticism has potential to become dangerous.

### **phantomthewhite (I) wrote:**

Eh, it is a very good topic. Thanks for it.

In Buddhism I don't like the fact, that enlightenment is so difficult. I also don't like the fact, that I myself have to strive hard for it, nobody can attain it for me :(.

Another thing that annoys me is, that though the Buddhism seems to be easy to be understood, it is extremely deep and it takes many years before one understands even the basic teachings. Anyway, the basic teachings are based on enlightenment, and enlightenment is difficult to be achieved, so that's it.

Another unpleasant thing that I see in Buddhism is, that though "all people" can attain enlightenment, disabled persons cannot. Disabled persons can practice virtue, meditation and certain kind of wisdom, but they cannot gain neither jhanas (extremely deep concentrations) nor Nibbana (enlightenment).

Another thing I don't like about my religion is that so little number of people understand it while I feel that I have understood a lot of it. When I see, that I have found a truth or a treasure, I sincerely like to share it with others. However, though I try a lot, I am not successful. Either the people are not enough developed or they are blind. Rarely it happens, that

those that I speak with understand what I explain them.

There is another annoying thing, that the scripture of Buddhism contains some little number of mistakes. Though it is a little number, it is a number. Thus it is difficult to claim that the scripture is holy or perfect. Many scholars claim, that those parts were written later, but then we could say that any of the parts could have been written later, so which part should we accept? :-) Fortunately, the teachings is practiced and completed by many monks even today, so I can learn to attain enlightenment from those who are enlightened, they certainly know what is correct and what is not.

## **Aristostomias replied:**

Wow. You find shortcomings even in the scripture. I'm awed . I do not think most religious people would be able to do the same. And really, thank you for an honest take on the shortcomings of your religion. (bow)

## **My reply to Aristostomias:**

The Buddha taught, that before enlightenment there are five hindrances:

1. Sensual desire
2. Ill will
3. Sloth and torpor
4. Restlessness and worry
5. Doubt.

These five hindrances are completely eradicated only with the stage of Arahant, which is the fully enlightened person (there are four stages, the highest is the Arahant stage). You can see, from these five hindrances the one leading to leaving the "path to enlightenment" is doubt (but interesting is, that already with the first stage of the four stages of enlightenment the doubt is lost - see <http://www.accesstoinsight.org/tipitaka/kn/snp/snp.2.01.piya.html>>Ratana Sutta</a> for reference).

In Sri Lanka and many other Buddhist countries the monks have so great doubt, that they even preach, that enlightenment is not possible today, because the original teaching is lost. However, I know from friends who met enlightened people (including my meditation teacher who learned from them), so that doesn't bother me. What is important is, that until I am enlightened, I will have always doubt that the Buddha was wrong or that I am wrong or that something else is wrong. The doubt is inherent in us and we have to understand it, accept it and do something with it.

The result of my doubt is my presence here. I love to study about religions and check and test and examine whether there is some other religion, better than the one which I follow right now. Whenever I study I study in the most unbiased way possible. Yes, after I get a result I tell it very directly without hiding anything, that is my way, because otherwise I am not able to do my research well. By sincerity and truth we may find what is the true religion. And if we cannot find the true religion, at least we can find what is "the best religion for ourselves". For me, now it is Buddhism.

I criticize Islam a lot, but that is not because atheists or non-muslims would make me do so. It is because I was ardently listening to [u]Muslims[/u] and [u]Muslim scholars[/u] and because I have some brain and I am capable of using it I understood the flaws of Islam just from the discussions with Muslims. After their discussions I started to study Islam more

and check whether I was not wrong, whether I didn't understand the Muslim scholars in a wrong way. And I again studied from Muslim sources (but of course also utilising the non-Muslim sources so that I could have unbiased source of knowledge). Thus I got to the conclusion, that Islam is one of the last religions I would ever follow. I enjoy the fact, that I am neither Christian nor atheist, therefore I can well unbiasedly watch and study bias in those anti-Muslim websites written by various people. Discerning the logical truth and truthful information from that illogical and based on hatred I was able to learn a lot about Islam from both sides.

Anyway, thank you for a beautiful topic, it was no surprise for me that Muslims again proved to be blind sheep.

## **Who is your god**

### **From phantomthewhite:**

I would like to invite everybody to share here his/her opinions on the character of God or gods that one believes in. If you are atheist, please, explain what is the God that you don't believe in (atheist is a person, who doesn't believe in God). Please, don't write here definitions of God from any scripture or from a dictionary or website. I invite you all to share here your own belief, as you have it in your heart, not in a scripture.

Here is the God that I believe in:

I believe in the God, who has perfected loving-kindness, compassion, mutual-joy and equanimity. I believe, that the God has so subtle body, that we cannot see him, and that he is the most powerful of all beings that he can see. I believe, that the God believes, that he created the universe, but I don't believe that it is actually true. I believe, that the God always speaks truth, that he never encourages anyone to kill (even in self-defense), steal, do sexual misconduct, tell lies (even for "good purposes") or even drink alcohol as He Himself would never do it. I also believe, that the God has immensely long life, so long, that he himself can't imagine the end of his life and therefore thinks, that he lives eternally. I also believe, that the God doesn't eat and drink like we do, and that he is not attached to sensual pleasures, as he enjoys pleasure, which human can gain only in very, very developed meditation. I also believe, that such pleasure is actually the God's food.

I also believe, that if one eradicates all roots of greed, hatred and ignorance in him/her (and thus becomes enlightened), he is actually more developed than the God because even the God has residue of those three qualities. Those qualities will lead him to rebirth after death (which, however, is still so far, that he himself cannot believe in it).

### **Comment from II\_Faisal\_II:**

oneaim wrote:

...You are created in this life for the test to worship the creator of universe...

sthorn wrote:

why?

why would the creator create beings to worship itself? for what purpose?

this assumes the creator has an ego.

why would a god need an ego? and why does it need to be soothed?

what exactly is going on with these gods that they need this constant attention from us?

these gods we serve sound suspiciously like ourselves

just sayin'

Answer:

Allah (God) the Almighty, Who is the Creator/Maker of the universe and of all beings in it, created the universe for very significant purposes. Quran informs this as follows:

"We (Allah) created not the heavens and the earth and all that is between them for a (mere) play." [Quran 21:16]

"And We (Allah) created not the heavens and the earth, and all that is between them, for mere play.

We created them not except with truth (i.e. to examine and test those who are obedient and those who are disobedient and then reward the obedient ones and punish the disobedient ones), but most of them know not." [Quran 27:38-39]

"And I (Allah) created not the jinn and mankind except that they should worship Me (Alone).

I seek not any provision from them (i.e. provision for themselves or for My creatures) nor do I ask that they should feed Me (i.e. feed themselves or My creatures).

Verily, Allah is the All-Provider, Owner of Power, the Most Strong." [Quran 51:56-58]

All beings glorify and magnify the Exalted Creator with their languages. They fulfill the tasks with a pleasure and enthusiasm, which are assigned to them.

Besides, if the universe had not been created, the never-ending perfection and beauty of the names and attributes of Allah Almighty would have never been known. This would have only been known by Allah Almighty. By manifesting the spiritual beauties of His names and attributes, Allah Almighty, besides beholding His own Beauty and Perfection on His own works, also wished to give a share to angels, man, and jinn from this honor and bestowal.

Fundamentally, we can say that the creation is the natural consequence of the attribute of creator. Allah is the creator. That is one of his attributes. That is what he has informed us. That being his attribute, the creator, the natural consequence or the product of this attribute is his creation.

A painter, if we are to draw a similitude on a lower level, who tells you that he is a painter, if you ask him where are his paintings and he replies I don't have any. What kind of painter is this? The concept of a painter who doesn't paint, there is some thing not quite gelling together here, of course Allah is beyond this. But if we are to understand on the simplest level, the two go together. The perfection of a painter lies in his paintings. His quality and his ability to paint, is manifest in his paintings. And Allah, beyond all that, as creator, this quality of creation is manifest in the creation itself. Allah didn't create out of a need. No, the fact that he is the creator, is manifest in the creation.

There is another aspect, besides the fact that the creation exists because Allah is the creator. We can also see from what the

Prophet sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) has informed us, that in the creation there is manifestation of Allah's attributes of mercy, forgiveness, kindness etc etc. Allah created man in paradise, they disobeyed Allah, but Allah had taught them how to repent, how to turn back to him and seek his forgiveness, then he would forgive them. So in our sinning and asking Allah's forgiveness, the attribute of Allah's mercy and forgiveness becomes manifest.

The Prophet (Peace be upon him) is quoted as saying that when Allah created the universe, He made an obligation on Himself, recorded in a document, kept by Him, that "My mercy precedes my wrath." The Prophet (Peace be upon him) also was reported as saying;

"Allah created mercy with a hundred parts. One of which was sent down upon the jinn and human beings and other living creatures. It is out of this one part that they love each other, show kindness to one another, and even the animals treat their offspring with affection. Allah has reserved the remaining ninety-nine parts for his true worshippers on the Day of Judgment."

This is the mercy of Allah manifest in his creation.

## **reply from sthorn:**

thank you II\_Faisal\_II for that well thought-out, and informed reply  
know again, my friend, that i do not attack any religion in particular,  
but i figure if a religion can't be simplified so a fool like myself can understand it, than it surely can't hold water.

i still get the impression that this god views it's creation almost as a mirror image of itself,  
and then gets angry at it's imperfections.

if a god is to be omni-anything

it cannot be held to the human attributes with which we assign it

why would a god be vain, and attention-seeking?

it's absurd.

but i do confess the absurdity is what piques my interest

"We (Allah) created not the heavens and the earth and all that is between them for a (mere) play." [Quran 21:16]

what? no joy?

or is that only reserved for the eternal praise-singing (which is starting to sound insidious)

this heaven doesn't sound like much fun

what about dogs, will there be dogs in heaven?

## **My (phantomthewhite's) reaction:**

I would like to support sthorn in very clever thinking, I agree with all the counter-arguments.

However, the monotheistic God can have an ego, the God never says, that he has not ego and he also explicitly says, that he made human in the image of himself (if possible, correct my quote from Bible). As such God can be greedy, hating, ignorant, loving, compassionate, helpful etc. God can reward and punish exactly as man can. God has bad qualities, that means qualities that lead to harm (such as that he wants to put all disbelievers to burn and suffer and scream in hell forever), as he is similar to us. This is the monotheistic conception. If God is all-good, then there cannot be anything bad, because if God didn't have anything to do with concept of bad God would not create it. For example, God has nothing to do with two-dimensional space, that is why we do not live in two-dimensional space. Similarly, if God had nothing to do with harm and sorrow, God would have not created it. Because God created it, God has to do something with it. As such God is not all-good and here we find a mistake in Qur'an.

I would argue that the God of "holy scriptures" is just an alien from other planet who represents his people and who is afraid that we may attack them after we get developed. I would suggest to see information about Raelian Movement.

The Buddha explained, referring to God:

Quote:

"If, O Bhikkhus, beings experience pain and happiness as the result of God's creation, then certainly these naked ascetics must have been created by a wicked God, since they suffer such terrible pain."

<http://www.viet.net/~anson/ebud/budtch/budteach23.htm>

(In the Buddha's time as well as now there were many ascetics in forests who did a lot of self-torturing practices (wrongly) hoping that it would lead them to enlightenment).

## **II\_Faisal\_II comments:**

sthorn wrote:

thank you II\_Faisal\_II for that well thought-out, and informed reply  
know again, my friend, that i do not attack any religion in particular,  
but i figure if a religion can't be simplified so a fool like myself can understand it, than it surely can't hold water.

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this heaven doesn't sound like much fun

Unlike the Bible, the word "heaven(s)" in the Quran is Not used to refer to Paradise or the Hereafter but it refers to the sky above us & Universe.

Regarding the pleasure of the Eternal Paradise, the following describes the pleasures of Paradise in brief:

Allah (God) has said in the Quran:

“And give good news (O Muhammad) to those who believe and do good deeds, that they will have gardens (Paradise) in which rivers flow....” (Quran 2:25)

Allah (God) has also said:

“Race one with another for forgiveness from your Lord and for Paradise, whose width is as the width of the heavens and the earth, which has been prepared for those who believe in Allah (God) and His messengers....” (Quran 57:21)

The Prophet Muhammad, may the mercy and blessings of Allah (God) be upon him, told us that the lowest in rank among the dwellers of Paradise will have ten times the like of this world, and he or she will have whatever he or she desires and ten times like it.

Also, the Prophet Muhammad said: “A space in Paradise equivalent to the size of a foot would be better than the world and what is in it.”

He also said: “In Paradise there are things which no eye has seen, no ear has heard, and no human mind has thought of.” He also said: “The most miserable man in the world of those meant for Paradise will be dipped once in Paradise. Then he will be asked, ‘Son of Adam, did you ever face any misery? Did you ever experience any hardship?’ So he will say, ‘No, by Allah (God), O Lord! I never faced any misery, and I never experienced any hardship.’”

If you enter Paradise, you will live a very happy life without sickness, pain, sadness, or death; Allah (God) will be pleased with you; and you will live there forever. Allah (God) has said in the Quran:

“But those who believe and do good deeds, We will admit them to gardens (Paradise) in which rivers flow, lasting in them forever....” (Quran 4:57)

Allah (God) has promised the inhabitants of Paradise that they will have all that they imagined and He gives us a glimpse of this when he says:

“... there will be there all that the souls could desire, all that the eyes could delight in ...” (Quran 43:71)

The hearts of the people of Paradise will be pure, their speech will be good, their deeds righteous. There will be no hurtful, upsetting, offensive or provocative talk there, for Paradise is free of all worthless words and deeds.

Talking about the people of Paradise, Allah says:

“They will not hear therein ill speech or commission of sin. But only the saying of: Peace! Peace!” (Quran 56:25-26)

There will be no enmity between people nor ill-feelings:

“And We (Allah) shall remove from their breasts any (mutual) hatred or sense of injury (which they had, if at all, in the life

of this world)...” (Quran 7:43)

=====

If you are interested to know more about the concept of God in Islam then I advice you to read the following comprehensive article here > <http://www.islam101.com/tauheed/conceptofGod.htm>

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### **sthorn reacts:**

phantomthewhite wrote:

...the monotheistic God can have an ego, the God never says, that he has not ego and he also explicitly says, that he made human in the image of himself (if possible, correct my quote from Bible). As such God can be greedy, hating, ignorant, loving, compassionate, helpful etc. God can reward and punish exactly as man can. God has bad qualities, that means qualities that lead to harm (such as that he wants to put all disbelievers to burn and suffer and scream in hell forever), as he is similar to us. This is the monotheistic conception. If God is all-good, then there cannot be anything bad, because if God didn't have anything to do with concept of bad God would not create it. For example, God has nothing to do with two-dimensional space, that is why we do not live in two-dimensional space. Similarly, if God had nothing to do with harm and sorrow, God would have not created it. Because God created it, God has to do something with it. As such God is not all-good and here we find a mistake in Qur'an...

therein lies the rub, eh?

phantomthewhite wrote:

...(In the Buddha's time as well as now there were many ascetics in forests who did a lot of self-torturing practices (wrongly) hoping that it would lead them to enlightenment).

i would agree that these practices may seem extreme

but one can not judge another's path(s), only question it in hopes of learning something we didn't know beforehand

### **sthorn continues:**

II\_Faisal\_II wrote:

Unlike the Bible, the word "heaven(s)" in the Quran is Not used to refer to Paradise or the Hereafter but it refers to the sky above us & Universe.

yes, i was using the term 'heaven' as a general term for 'paradise', but thank you for the correction

II\_Faisal\_II wrote:

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let's be clear. while Allah may have said this, it was a scribe who penned it.

this particular scribe's environment was an arid desert. were Allah to start speaking to a tribe along the amazon, would this paradise of gardens and flowing rivers sound as grand and other-worldly? or do paradises change and morph as to the individual's temperment, or what Allah knows the person wishes to hear? that might be construed as deceptive and misleading

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yes yes, that's all well and good. paradise will be swell.

everybody will be happy, without pain, and content... forever singing peace, and looking at the scenery.

pie in the sky when you die

but consider what phantomthewhite noted;

can Allah create something other than an extension of itself? such as evil.

that might imply a duality

is this possible for a touted singularity? (it is, but i'm deconstructing at the moment)

"For verily Allah has power over all things"

why create something and then tell everyone to avoid it under threat of punishment?

tell your child to avoid something, and what often happens?

would you cast your child forever into a pit of flame and despair if they disobeyed you?

that would be heartless and without mercy, and yet we are told Allah is All Merciful

as to these attributes of this god, does it list pride? boastfulness?

as i said earlier, there are far too many human attributes attached to these gods to make them anything more than a being with an unstated (and suspicious) motivation in directing our behavior, or a mere minor deity in charge of some little backwater, hoping the boss doesn't check in

it seems there was once an Essene sub-sect in the Qumran region that believed there was only so much evil in the world, and it was their duty to use it all up. is this world view any less valid than any other?

## **Artriex comments:**

oneaim wrote:

Must know that most Muslims wish to be Death is the end for their life and not at all to account for every thing they have done in their life small and large. But this will not happen. All of us going to be asked after death about every thing and the God, the creator going to punish every one who have done bad deeds.

Well, that is the general belief of every religion, but most religious texts of today have started out in the 'dark ages' as being used as weapons or tools of the individual churches in order to put fear into people's hearts and minds and bend them into submission.

But a question to everyone is put forth: WHY do you all believe that after we die, we are going to be 'judged' based on how we have lived our lives? If no one can answer that without having to fall back on some obscure religious text that they themselves cannot fully understand, then do not bother answering it. You should only should attempt to answer it based on your OWN thoughts, not the thoughts and opinions of your church.

## **Calmlikeabomb99 reacts:**

But a question to everyone is put forth: WHY do you all believe that after we die, we are going to be 'judged' based on how we have lived our lives? If no one can answer that without having to fall back on some obscure religious text that they themselves cannot fully understand, then do not bother answering it. You should only should attempt to answer it based on your OWN thoughts, not the thoughts and opinions of your church.

There consequences for everything we do secretly and to what we admit to or get caught doing. their must be some kind of consequence other then the earthly ones we endure

## **My comment:**

Quote:

There consequences for everything we do secretly and to what we admit to or get caught doing. their must be some kind of consequence other then the earthly ones we endure

Even if there is no kind of consequence of all actions that we do (even those secret), we would have to develop it.

“If there were no God, it would have been necessary to invent him.”

Voltaire

## **Why are Muslims blind**

### **sthorn wrote:**

why?

why would a god need slaves, or servants?

consider; an omnipotent being would not have needs, wants, or desires

if anything, a creator with these attributes sounds lonely, bored, and rather sad.

if i meet up with him before you guys, i'll try to cheer him up

and perhaps he'll lighten up a bit on all that damnation you're expecting[/quote]

### **I (phantomthewhite) wrote:**

sthorn, understand please, that Muslims worship their Allah (or Satan?) every day five times. Thus they are completely brainwashed and there is not much possibility to make them understand something else.

Suppose you live with the most beautiful girl in the world about whom millions of people say that she is the most beautiful girl in the world, she is the perfect one. Suppose that the girl gives you extreme sensual pleasure, loves you and makes you extremely happy.

And then, if someone comes and says - your girlfriend is not good, she will get old, she will get sick and she will die.

What would you do? You may believe him, but will that make you leave the girl? Never. Never. You will know, that the girl is abominable from heel to head - that there is feces and urine in her body, that there is blood and bones in her body, that she feels pain and sorrow in certain times, that she has troubles and that she has greed, hatred and ignorance in herself. You may know that. But because she is with you, because she gives you that pleasure and because she seems to be so beautiful, you will never accept the truth. And that is exactly the way how Muslims are blinded - they may know and realize, that there are problems with Islam, but they will never realize them because they have that worship five times a day.

## **Why people oppose religions**

### **I (phantomthewhite) wrote:**

Quote:

Why people oppose the religions? do they understand the religion more than others till they dare to defy the religion?

or other reasons they think more reasonable? or just because they had seen the people?

It rather seems to me, that "opposing religion" is just another "religion". What is religion? In my opinion, "religion is a way of life connected with spiritual adherence." In atheism, the spiritual adherence is directed towards oneself.\* In atheism it is not God, who is worshiped, but it is health, knowledge, success, fame and wealth. I am afraid, that if I am correct, then atheism may be quite dangerous for some people if they do not naturally believe in significance of morality.

It seems, that all religions teach a certain kind of 'morality', and in atheism the 'morality' would be probably 'codified' by law or by tradition. I would like to note here, that (probably) all atheists are still dependent on culture, that is not originally atheistic, and thus they unconsciously follow rituals and habits of a religion (such as celebrating Christmas etc.) and in such a way it is hard for me to say, that there is any kind of 'genuine religion-refutation' in the world.

If religion is 'a way of life connected with spiritual adherence', then philosophy would be 'the way of gaining knowledge', as opposed to religion, which is rather based on belief, love to a spiritual being and also intuition. I have hard times with defining science, because in my opinion scientific knowledge, limited to five senses (that means excluding knowledge gained by supra-normal powers, intuition, meditation and spiritual experience), can hardly ever be labeled as 'the full path to knowledge'. From the three, I would certainly choose religion, as the way to the true knowledge. However, it is hard for us to choose 'the correct religion', as we are just blind men searching for spectacles in a heap of rubbish. I myself encourage anyone to follow a religion - not for the 'spiritual adherence', but to try, whether it suits his/her 'spiritual hunger' (if there is any).

Anyway, I would like to mention, that there is a fantastic 'development project' made by atheists, which may result in a great progress of humanity if it's put into practice. Not only this project, but many, many other very good development projects and fantastic things have been done by atheists and religion-deniers.

<http://www.thevenusproject.com>

\*Buddhism is not atheism. Only some atheists, who want to boast that they are Buddhists, they do so disregarding the Buddha's teaching on 31 worlds (of which 20 worlds are just gods' worlds), refuting the God Creator as just a deluded god and hundreds of pieces of advice how to be reborn in heaven (though not appreciating it as life in heaven is impermanent whereas enlightenment is permanent).

## **Answer from Kegan:**

phantomthewhite wrote:

It rather seems to me, that "opposing religion" is just another "religion".

That's similar to: "It rather seems to me, that 'silence' is just another 'music'."

Also, "opposing religion" is too broad a topic.

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phantomthewhite wrote:

What is religion? In my opinion, "religion is a way of life connected with spiritual adherence." In atheism, the spiritual adherence is directed towards oneself.\* In atheism it is not God, who is worshiped, but it is health, knowledge, success, fame and wealth

Then what is this "spiritual adherence"?

If you can't define it properly, there's no way to discuss whether this or that person worship this or that thing.

Also, 'atheism' is a commonly quoted by misleading label. There's no single dogma, culture, mindset of 'atheism', thus there's no way to discuss 'atheists' as if they're people of similar thoughts.

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phantomthewhite wrote:

I am afraid, that if I am correct, then atheism may be quite dangerous for some people if they do not naturally believe in significance of morality.

You cannot be accurately correct/incorrect when the definition of the terms you're using is not well defined.

Also, you're equating 'atheism' to 'having no morals', which sounds more like the cold-war era propaganda slogan.

There's no basis for such equation.

There are tons of people with religions who boast their beliefs to the top of their lungs and irritate the ears of their 'neighbors', yet they do corrupt dealings and other things that their religions oppose. The discussion about morality is a separate topic from religions and religiosity.

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phantomthewhite wrote:

It seems, that all religions teach a certain kind of 'morality', and in atheism the 'morality' would be probably 'codified' by law or by tradition.

On what basis did you make this "probability"? You're talking about 'atheism' as if it is a solidified codified religion with doctrine, which is a huge misconception.

There are some people without religions who base their 'morality' on reason, empathy and so on.

Try this BBC live Q&A between Richard Dawkins and an audience about "Absolute Morality".

There are other non-religious people with other reasoning ranging from the extreme absurdity to restrained mature reasoning.

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phantomthewhite wrote:

I would like to note here, that (probably)all atheists are still dependent on culture, that is not originally atheistic, and thus they unconsciously follow rituals and habits of a religion (such as celebrating Christmas etc.) and in such a way it is hard for me to say, that there is any kind of 'genuine religion-refutation' in the world.

If you check the statistical percentage as well as socio-historical environment of people without religion, most of them have been minorities in societies with religious views. So, of course, there would be some non-religious people who are somewhat dependent on the culture: they have to interact with their surroundings...they're not hermits.

But, to claim the probability that "all" non-religious people do that: that's an expressed generalization that have weak or no basis.

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phantomthewhite wrote:

I have hard times with defining science,

You can but just so you know the definition, methods and ethics have already been elaborated through reasoning and experiments.

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phantomthewhite wrote:

because in my opinion scientific knowledge, limited to five senses (that means excluding knowledge gained by supra-normal powers, intuition, meditation and spiritual experience), can hardly ever be labeled as 'the full path to knowledge'.

Those "five senses" thing is what gears us to reality, and reality is the very thing we can experience and be responsible for.

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phantomthewhite wrote:

From the three, I would certainly choose religion, as the way to the true knowledge.

But you've just said:

"If religion is 'a way of life connected with spiritual adherence', then philosophy would be 'the way of gaining knowledge', as opposed to religion, which is rather based on belief, love to a spiritual being and also intuition."

You've just said that religion doesn't actually have anything to do with true knowledge. It's just "a life connected to spiritual adherence", so how did it jump from there to being "the way to the true knowledge"?

You say that philosophy is the way to gaining knowledge, so wouldn't it be better to study philosophy rather than religions (if you're into seeking knowledge)?

Also, what is "spiritual adherence" anyway?

-----

phantomthewhite wrote:

Anyway, I would like to mention, that there is a fantastic 'development project' made by atheists, which may result in a great progress of humanity if it's put into practice. Not only this project, but many, many other very good development projects and fantastic things have been done by atheists and religion-deniers.

Of course, atheists are people too, not some different species with horns on their heads.

A good project is a good project --while bad idea is still a bad idea-- whatever one's background is.

## **My answer to Kegan:**

For Kegan:

Quote:

That's similar to: "It rather seems to me, that 'silence' is just another 'music'."

It's funny, that if you had checked my profile before writing this you would have seen that I mentioned it there. For me silence is just another kind of music :D .

Quote:

Then what is this "spiritual adherence"?

If you can't define it properly, there's no way to discuss whether this or that person worship this or that thing.

Yes, I am sorry for being unclear. Adherence is a combination of belief and following. For example, as a Buddhist monk I have adherence to the way to enlightenment - that means I believe that it is correct and I follow it. Islamic adherence may be towards Qur'an etc.

Quote:

Also, 'atheism' is a commonly quoted by misleading label. There's no single dogma, culture, mindset of 'atheism', thus there's no way to discuss 'atheists' as if they're people of similar thoughts.

I do not cling for words. For me words are just labels for the things that we perceive in the world. When I say atheist, I must (which I did not ... ) explain what does that mean. "Atheists are all people, who refuse existence of god or gods." The assumptions about atheists that I have written, such as that their spiritual adherence is to health, success etc. is outcome of my experience as I was brought up in predominantly atheist family. Here the spiritual adherence actually means belief and following worldly means of gaining those things. (Here you can argue that other religious people also follow worldly means, however, in this case the important thing is, that those worldly means are supposed to be the only way of realization of one's aims and thus elevating those means to the highest positions unlike the religious people, for whom the highest are the ways explained in their scriptures).

Quote:

Also, you're equating 'atheism' to 'having no morals', which sounds more like the cold-war era propaganda slogan.

I am sorry for my ignorance, what kind of cold-war propaganda slogan you mean? Anyway, I think that I was not equating it, I explained that atheism MAY lead to it. I believe, that the Christian culture is so inherent in the people in West, that they are "mature" for atheism. However, many people do not understand significance of morality and thus the religion may be a kind of help to them.

Quote:

There are tons of people with religions who boast their beliefs to the top of their lungs and irritate the ears of their 'neighbors', yet they do corrupt dealings and other things that their religions oppose.

Yes, you are correct. But still I believe, that many religious people live ethically just because of the religion, priest or scripture. I am sure that many religious people would start to do horrible things if they lost their religion.

Quote:

Try this BBC live Q&A between Richard Dawkins and an audience about "Absolute Morality".

I have seen whole the discussion few months ago, I love it :). However, Richard Dawkins there still speaks just about the people, who understood the significance of morality. There are many people, who understood it only in relation to a scripture or a priest.

Quote:

they have to interact with their surroundings...they're not hermits.

I don't think so. See how Islam is different and how the habits and daily-prayers are quite different from the previous believes in Makkah. However, still, they completely changed their habits and they survived. I think that if atheists want, they can (at least gradually) stop the Sun-worship habits (such as Christmas) and other that are rather contradictory to what they believe in.

Quote:

[http://www.sciencemadesimple.com/scientific\\_method.html](http://www.sciencemadesimple.com/scientific_method.html)

You have two options for your conclusions: based on your results, either you can reject the hypothesis, or you can not reject the hypothesis. This is an important point. You can not PROVE the hypothesis with a single experiment, because there is a chance that you made an error somewhere along the way. What you can say is that your results SUPPORT the original hypothesis.

I don't know whether you watched some lectures of Feynman, the famous physicist. In one of his lectures he spoke about extraterrestrials. And he said - I say, that their existence is highly improbable. The science cannot say whether it is possible or not, it can just say - it is highly improbable. (I hope I quote him exactly.) Thus science can never be way to absolute knowledge. You gave me some link, I am lazy to dig in them information - please, can you show me a trustworthy source where is written, that science accepts spiritual and meditation experience and count on them?

Quote:

Those "five senses" thing is what gears us to reality, and reality is the very thing we can experience and be responsible for.

I believe that without mind you know actually nothing. I don't speak about Descartes' "cogito ergo sum", I speak about intuition. I sincerely believe, that intuition is one of the most important means of gaining knowledge that we have and that we rely on. However, there are other means of gaining knowledge that we can develop (and that many people developed and teach) such as knowledge gained by psychical powers attained in meditation (Buddha's teaching is full of instruction on how to attain it), telepathy, clairvoyance, divine ear etc. etc. All those means of gaining knowledge are inseparable from our life, as many of us have them in a lesser form as intuition (that is what I believe in) and we rely on them.

Quote:

"If religion is 'a way of life connected with spiritual adherence', then philosophy would be 'the way of gaining knowledge', as opposed to religion, which is rather based on belief, love to a spiritual being and also intuition."

You've just said that religion doesn't actually have anything to do with true knowledge. It's just "a life connected to spiritual adherence", so how did it jump from there to being "the way to the true knowledge"?

You say that philosophy is the way to gaining knowledge, so wouldn't it be better to study philosophy rather than religions (if you're into seeking knowledge)?

Yes, you are absolutely correct, I have committed a contradiction. Here is my explanation - my mistake was in the word "rather" - "religion, which is rather based on belief". Here the word "rather" was used incorrectly and I apologize for it. Religion is based on belief, but it does not prohibit empirical knowledge. What I wanted to express was, that religion accepts spiritual experience and empirical knowledge both as a means to gain knowledge. Philosophy and science do not accept spiritual experience, meditation experience, intuition etc. as a trustworthy means of knowledge, which was the main point I wanted to express. I am again sorry for my wrong way of explanation.

Anyway, thank you very much for commenting my comments :).

## **Answer from Kegan:**

[quote="phantomthewhite"] It's funny, that if you had checked my profile before writing this you would have seen that I mentioned it there. For me silence is just another kind of music .[/quote]

Hmm, I didn't read your profile but I expected you to say that.

Well, yes sure, if you want to be avant-garde about it. One can even say that the noises -- in a bus, tunnel, public toilet and so on-- are "music", too. But, that's not the normal definition of the word.

You say that you're not one to cling for words and that words are just labels. But, to perceive, communicate and think about idea accurately, one needs accurate use of words. Imagine a person labeling a red fruit as "passionate" when it's actually "poisonous".

[quote="phantomwhite"] The assumptions about atheists that I have written, such as that their spiritual adherence is to health, success etc. is outcome of my experience as I was brought up in predominantly atheist family. Here the spiritual

adherence actually means belief and following worldly means of gaining those things. (Here you can argue that other religious people also follow worldly means, however, in this case the important thing is, that those worldly means are supposed to be the only way of realization of one's aims and thus elevating those means to the highest positions unlike the religious people, for whom the highest are the ways explained in their scriptures).[/quote]

Hmm, surely you've only seen a bit of samples. There are religious people who cling onto the very same notion that you're describing and even go at length at being corrupt government officials while they publicly show their religiosity.

In [url= [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Maslow%27s\\_hierarchy\\_of\\_needs](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Maslow%27s_hierarchy_of_needs)]Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs[url] you can see that you're only describing the lower parts of the pyramid. You have denied non-religious people's "self-actualization" part. There are non-religious people such as Carl Sagan who have dreams beyond mere health, success, etc.

[quote="phantomwhite"]However, many people do not understand significance of morality and thus the religion may be a kind of help to them.[/quote]

When a person don't understand or even rejects morality, nothing can help them. I met a supposedly "Christian" girl who slept around, even with a married grandpa and tried to kick the grandpa's wife out. Yet, she refused to deny God and Christianity, and she kept on praying to "God".

Also, even worse, when a person rejects morality but finds the power behind the concept of religion, that person would create a new pseudo-religion that people would follow. Take the Talibans with their promise of 72 virgins for example. What's the point of keeping a 'pure' life and sacrificing self to bomb people if these people just dream about heavenly orgies?

Morality has no connection to religion. There are tons of examples of immoral acts in the Bible which seemed to be condoned by God. Take David and his raiding Philistine cities and killing the women and children there.

When a person is moral and has critical thinking, s/he will refuse doing questionable actions. When a person is neither moral nor have a tendency to use his/her head, not even the risk of death-sentence would deter them.

[quote="phantomwhite"]

Quote:

they have to interact with their surroundings...they're not hermits.

I don't think so. See how Islam is different and how the habits and daily-prayers are quite different from the previous believes in Makkah. However, still, they completely changed their habits and they survived. I think that if atheists want, they can (at least gradually) stop the Sun-worship habits (such as Christmas) and other that are rather contradictory to what they believe in.[/quote]

Just because you don't think so doesn't mean non-religious people need or must do so. There are tons of other issues in this world and non-religious people have received enough flak and discrimination for being who they are as it is.

Besides, since when does a non-religious person equate "Christmas" to "sun-worship"? I have never even heard of a non-religious person celebrating December 25th as the birth of Jesus, too.

[quote="phantomwhite"]Thus science can never be way to absolute knowledge. You gave me some link, I am lazy to dig in them information - please, can you show me a trustworthy source where is written, that science accepts spiritual and meditation experience and count on them?[/quote]

If you're too lazy to dig in the links I gave you, then there's no point of giving you another one. Either you read them or you don't. What am I anyway? Your virtual servant who spoon-feed you gently?

Now, onto discussing your words: what exactly does Feynman and space aliens have anything to do with "science can never be a way to absolute knowledge"?

Besides, science by definition is never absolute. It's a realistic exploration and experimentation of concepts and it's always dynamic. If there are new facts to be found, the old theory can either be improved or debunked. That's reality. There's no such thing as "absolute knowledge".

If you want to look at studies that debunk spiritual claims, you can try these:

[url= <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nCVzz96zKA0>] Michael Shermer – Out of Body Experience[/url]

[url= <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mxSNuIx4m5k>] Michael Shermer – How to Bend a Spoon with Your Mind[/url]

[url= [http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8T\\_jwq9ph8k](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8T_jwq9ph8k)] James Randi Debunks Peter Popoff Faith Healer[/url]

[url= [http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HP5\\_4x8eBXI](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HP5_4x8eBXI)] James Randi and Thought Transference[/url]

[url= <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qliIsDIkDtg>] Professor Ramachandran – The Temporal Lobe and God[/url]

and there are tons others. These such videos have rejected your claims to telepathy, clairvoyant and others.

[quote="phantomwhite"] Religion is based on belief, but it does not prohibit empirical knowledge. What I wanted to express was, that religion accepts spiritual experience and empirical knowledge both as a means to gain knowledge.[/quote]

Wrong. Faith, by definition, rejects evidences and empirical knowledge. Otherwise, we won't have so much drama concerning the theory of evolution, Copernicus being burned, etc.

[quote="phantomwhite"]Philosophy and science do not accept spiritual experience, meditation experience, intuition etc. as a trustworthy means of knowledge, which was the main point I wanted to express.[/quote]

That's because spiritual and meditational experience are exactly that: not trustworthy means of knowledge and in many cases have been debunked many times.

## **My answer to Kegan:**

Quote:

You have denied non-religious people  self-actualization  part.

I didn't say, that non-religious people do this or don't do this (as far as I remember). I claimed, that atheism may be dangerous for some people.

Quote:

Take the Talibans with their promise of 72 virgins for example. What is the point of keeping a pure life and sacrificing self to bomb people if these people just dream about heavenly orgies?

Yes, now you can imagine what a massacre and Sodoma-Gomorah it would be if they have no religion at all.

Quote:

When a person is neither moral nor have a tendency to use his/her head, not even the risk of death-sentence would deter them.

Yes, you are absolutely correct. However, for me, religion always had impact on my morality. As an atheist I didn't kill, that's true, but I was stealing, telling lies, deceiving etc. After I embraced Buddhism I stopped stealing, telling lies and deceiving. I don't think that I am the only person in the world who changed after becoming religious. As such I present myself as the proof, that religion can have impact on people's morality.

Quote:

I have never even heard of a non-religious person celebrating December 25th as the birth of Jesus, too.

Yes, the original understanding of many religious festivals is changed or forgotten. However, I think, that atheists, being free from religion can make their own habits and their own life. After I became a Buddhist I stopped to celebrate Christmas. Instead I tried my best to be generous every day, to help people every day, to be kind and pleasant every day, to give things that I cherished to others and make them happy as much as possible. Thus Christmas became a very weak encouragement for "generosity" in my eyes as I saw, that I could be generous and helpful every day.

Quote:

What am I anyway? Your virtual servant who spoon-feed you gently?

If you asked me to search for you any information, I would do it for you (throughout the years of studying and following Buddhism I learned, that every opportunity to help is rather a luck than a disturbance). I thought you are not much different in this point. Whenever I was asked for help or for favor, I was happy to help others. I am sorry that I was wrong in understanding your character.

Quote:

Now, onto discussing your words: what exactly does Feynman and space aliens have anything to do with science can never be a way to absolute knowledge? Besides, science by definition is never absolute.

Though I don't agree with "thoughts" and "ideas" of Richard Feynman, I believe that he was one of the great geniuses of modern era regarding his great feats in science. He, as a scientist, was teaching the theory of science. My quote was just to show, that science is never absolute. It is interesting, that though you opposed my quotation you actually understood it.

Quote:

There's no such thing as absolute knowledge.

Yes, that is for people, who don't know Indian religions. I study Indian religions at University in Sri Lanka (small country just under India) and it seems, that Indian religions try to show their followers the way to absolute knowledge. This absolute knowledge is always (in Buddhism, Jainism and Hinduism as well) to be gained in meditation. I left my wealth, girlfriend, family, friends and success in my country and became a Buddhist monk living in forest just being supported by pious people, without using money, without eating after noon, with shaved head and red robes - all that just and only for the sake of gaining "absolute knowledge". As such there is no doubt, that not only that I believe, that "absolute knowledge" can be gained, but I believe, that it can be gained by me, in this very life, before death, even now or tomorrow if possible. The Buddha explained in thousands of details how that "absolute knowledge" should be gained. I have studied it and I have no doubt that it may work (as I myself follow the advice every day). But, one thing is sure - it is useless to argue with you about "absolute knowledge", because I don't have it and you too. Nobody who has it is here in my room to prove it to you and even if such a person was here in my room, that person would not be able to prove you that he/she has it. You must gain it yourself. OK, you maybe don't want to gain absolute knowledge. But I do. That is why I am where I am and why I do what I do. Maybe after forty, fifty years I gain it. But unfortunately even if I tell it to you, you may not believe me, because it is not provable by words or actions. It must be proved by oneself. There is this fantastic story about tortoise and fish from Narada Maha Thera's "Buddha and His Teaching":

[http://www.bps.lk/bp\\_library/bp\\_102s/page\\_33.html](http://www.bps.lk/bp_library/bp_102s/page_33.html) (under the heading "Is Nibbana Nothingness?")

Quote:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nCVzz96zKA0>]Michael Shermer □ Out of Body Experience[/url]

[url= <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mxSNUx4m5k>]Michael Shermer □ How to Bend a Spoon with Your Mind[/url]

[url= [http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8T\\_jwq9ph8k](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8T_jwq9ph8k)]James Randi Debunks Peter Popoff Faith Healer[/url]

[url= [http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HP5\\_4x8eBXI](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HP5_4x8eBXI)]James Randi and Thought Transference[/url]

[url= <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qLiIsDIkDtg>]Professor Ramachandran □ The Temporal Lobe and God[/url]

These such videos have rejected your claims to telepathy, clairvoyant and others.

Thank you very much for the videos, it was definitely very beneficial for me to see them, thank you for that kind help. However, there is nothing about meditation in the videos. When I speak about psychic powers, I speak about psychic powers received through very high developed meditation. But one thing I have learned - intuition and strange things that commonly happen to be seen by normal people will much probably be not connected with psychic powers received through meditation.

The Buddha explained, that there are six psychic powers (chalabhinna):

1) spiritual power of the heavenly eye, 2) spiritual power of the heavenly ear, 3) spiritual power of knowledge of past lives, 4) spiritual power of knowledge of the minds of others, 5) powers derived from a spiritual basis, 6) spiritual power of the elimination of outflows/defilement. (taken from [http://www.nalanda-university.com/buddhist-ayurveda-encyclopedia/six\\_spiritual\\_powers\\_sad-abhijnah\\_pali-chalabhinna\\_penetrations\\_siddhi\\_psychic\\_intuition\\_liu-shen-tung.htm](http://www.nalanda-university.com/buddhist-ayurveda-encyclopedia/six_spiritual_powers_sad-abhijnah_pali-chalabhinna_penetrations_siddhi_psychic_intuition_liu-shen-tung.htm))

However, the Buddha taught, that only the last one is important, as that is the one transcending death and impermanence. All the other are limited by death and impermanence. What I speak about, is the last one, because the last one is actually the

"absolute knowledge". The Buddha called it also as "asavakkhaya nana" - the knowledge of eradication of defilements (that is greed, hatred and ignorance). One has to be very generous, follow very good ethics and meditate a lot so that one can attain the "asavakkhaya nana". The other psychic powers sometimes are received and sometimes not, that depends on the actions that the person did in past, as they are just result of one's kamma/karma (intentionally committed actions). You can read "Tevijja Sutta" ( <http://www.dhammadownload.com/Tipitaka/read.php?id=13> ).

Quote:

Wrong. Faith, by definition, rejects evidences and empirical knowledge. Otherwise, we won't have so much drama concerning the theory of evolution, Copernicus being burned, etc.

Faith doesn't mean Christianity. Faith has various forms. Buddhism encourages empirical knowledge and many Muslims claim the same thing about Islam.

## **Answer from Kegan:**

phantomthewhite wrote:

Quote:

You have denied non-religious people's self-actualization part.

I didn't say, that non-religious people do this or don't do this (as far as I remember). I claimed, that atheism may be dangerous for some people.

Yes, you did say a lot of things that non religious people should do as well as what non-religious people strive for. Look at what you previously posted:

phantomwhite wrote:

In atheism it is not God, who is worshiped, but it is health, knowledge, success, fame and wealth.

You have shown that you think non religious people only delve upon the lower layers of Maslow's strata. (No offense but I'm just wondering, how could one not remember what one posted before or even not bother to check one's post first before responding to the next one?)

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phantomthewhite wrote:

Quote:

Take the Talibans with their promise of 72 virgins for example. What's the point of keeping a pure life and sacrificing self to bomb people if these people just dream about heavenly orgies?

Yes, now you can imagine what a massacre and Sodoma-Gomorah it would be if they have no religion at all.

What the heck are you talking about? Try telling that to the millions of people oppressed under the Talibans: "Be grateful, at least Allah don't atomic smack you all Afghanis back to Jurassic era!!!"

Really? A deity with such poor calculation and plan on how to develop morality and prosperity of the people resort to: "Well, you guys are terrorists, but at least you still call on my name. Oh, what the heck, it's good enough. Yeah, yeah, sure blast them, but be careful aye? \*pat\*pat""

Also, you're missing the point completely. My point is religion and morality are two separate things: desiring both pure earthly life and heavenly orgies simultaneously. Am I the only one of the two of us seeing huge...I mean Himalaya HUGE contradiction here?

Albeit I'll admit that the Talibans is an extreme example in anycase.

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phantomthewhite wrote:

Quote:

When a person is neither moral nor have a tendency to use his/her head, not even the risk of death-sentence would deter them.

Yes, you are absolutely correct.

Well, then, enough said.

phantomthewhite wrote:

However, for me, religion always had impact on my morality. As an atheist I didn't kill, that's true, but I was stealing, telling lies, deceiving etc.

After I embraced Buddhism I stopped stealing, telling lies and deceiving. I don't think that I am the only person in the world who changed after becoming religious. As such I present myself as the proof, that religion can have impact on people's morality.

Well, that's in your case. There are tons of factors related to it which should have been studied first before you make a claim it's religion that's changing people.

For example, maybe it's just because people need an authority figure/role model. Maybe people got fed up with western urban life and seek slower paced life of the monks. Maybe people just got fed up with their thoughts bound by rules and prefer somethign more free, etc.

There can be thousands of factors, which cannot always be lumped together as "it's because of religion".  
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phantomthewhite wrote:

Quote:

I have never even heard of a non-religious person celebrating December 25th as the birth of Jesus, too.

Yes, the original understanding of many religious festivals is changed or forgotten. However, I think, that atheists, being free from religion can make their own habits and their own life. After I became a Buddhist I stopped to celebrate Christmas. Instead I tried my best to be generous every day, to help people every day, to be kind and pleasant every day, to give things that I cherished to others and make them happy as much as possible. Thus Christmas became a very weak encouragement for "generosity" in my eyes as I saw, that I could be generous and helpful every day.

So, you stopped celebrating December 25th (notice I don't use the term 'Christmas' or 'sun worship day'), and perhaps you have some problems with other religion's holidays. Oh, and you've achieved enough empathy and sense to know that generosity isn't just for Christmas day, eh? Good for you.

But, who says most, if not all, non-religious people don't have the same thoughts of generosity and helpfulness?

For many non-religious people, there's no problem with recycling traditional celebration. After all, all it takes is just changing the content and focus of the celebration to make it a different celebration. Who doesn't like parties once in a while anyway? They're happy with it, so why bother?

If there's any value promoted by many non-religious people (albeit not all), it's the promotion of critical thinking and proper science literacy to cut through the things people throw at their kids. For example, watch this.

-----  
phantomthewhite wrote:

Quote:

What am I anyway? Your virtual servant who spoon-feed you gently?

If you asked me to search for you any information, I would do it for you (throughout the years of studying and following Buddhism I learned, that every opportunity to help is rather a luck than a disturbance). I thought you are not much different in this point. Whenever I was asked for help or for favor, I was happy to help others. I am sorry that I was wrong in understanding your character.

What the? Let me get this straight...you said were too lazy to dig into the links I gave you, like a three-year old kid refusing whining about the food he's given --while there's practically a smorgasboard of Google-y goodness other than the ones I've posted; a quick visit to the temple of Google would satiate much of your thirst if you just follow the science and critical thinking sites.

Then you had the gull to ask me some more links and now make even more assumptions about my character based on your sketchy response?

Dude, since the beginning of your post in this thread you make way too much assumption about non-religious people and then about me. Does being a Buddhist monk involve a lot of rights on being presumptuous?

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phantomthewhite wrote:

Quote:

Now, onto discussing your words: what exactly does Feynman and space aliens have anything to do with □ science can never be a way to absolute knowledge□? Besides, science by definition is never absolute.

Though I don't agree with "thoughts" and "ideas" of Richard Feynman, I believe that he was one of the great geniuses of modern era regarding his great feats in science. He, as a scientist, was teaching the theory of science. My quote was just to show, that science is never absolute. It is interesting, that though you opposed my quotation you actually understood it.

Any person with proper education in science would know that science is never absolute. That's how humanity gets REAL progress instead of imagined magic, conspiracy-theory tales and so many other pseudo-science things that get humans nowhere.

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phantomthewhite wrote:

Quote:

There□s no such thing as □ absolute knowledge□.

Yes, that is for people, who don't know Indian religions.

Tsk, tsk, tsk...too much assumption...too MUCH assumption. You're one of several people that makes me cringe when we speak to each other.

Yes, I've never studied it at the university level as you have done, but I would say I know enough of them to know their worth.

-----  
phantomwhite wrote:

I study Indian religions at University in Sri Lanka (small country just under India) and it seems, that Indian religions try to show their followers the way to absolute knowledge. This absolute knowledge is always (in Buddhism, Jainism and Hinduism as well) to be gained in meditation. I left my wealth, girlfriend, family, friends and success in my country and became a Buddhist monk living in forest just being supported by pious people, without using money, without eating after noon, with shaved head and red robes - all that just and only for the sake of gaining "absolute knowledge". As such there is no doubt, that not only that I believe, that "absolute knowledge" can be gained, but I believe, that it can be gained by me, in this very life, before death, even now or tomorrow if possible. The Buddha explained in thousands of details how that "absolute knowledge" should be gained. I have studied it and I have no doubt that it may work (as I myself follow the advice every day).

Well, good luck.

-----  
phantomthewhite wrote:

But, one thing is sure - it is useless to argue with you about "absolute knowledge", because I don't have it and you too.

Au contraire, the uselessness of the discussion lies in your ardent faith of the existence of this "absolute knowledge". As I've posted before, faith will persist despite of reason and evidence (or lack thereof).

The only "absolute" knowledge I'm aware of consist of three tennets:

1. Taoist' Yin-yang concept: not the whole spiritual thing, just the concept that the world will always revolve between good and evil, and when people try to be too good or too evil, they disturb natural healthy balance of life. Example of too good: permissiveness and overprotectiveness.

2. Socrates's "I know that I know nothing", though not to the extreme degree that he lived it. This tennet is very close and constantly practiced in science, which is why proper science makes claims only to the degree that it knows.

3. Everything is always changing.

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phantomthewhite wrote:

OK, you maybe don't want to gain absolute knowledge. But I do.

Well, yes. I'm not gonna spend my entire life looking for something that doesn't even exist.

I've followed and studied religions enough to know how its claims and promises work.

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phantomwhite wrote:

That is why I am where I am and why I do what I do. Maybe after forty, fifty years I gain it.

Again, good luck.

phantomthewhite wrote:

But unfortunately even if I tell it to you, you may not believe me, because it is not provable by words or actions.

Unfortunately, things that don't have proofs tend to be..., well, you get the idea.

phantomthewhite wrote:

[http://www.bps.lk/bp\\_library/bp\\_102s/page\\_33.html](http://www.bps.lk/bp_library/bp_102s/page_33.html) (under the heading "Is Nibbana Nothingness?")

Yes, I'm quite well aware of the whole concept of Nibana, dukkha and moksha.

The closest I've been to Nibana is when I'm at peace or when I'm "in the zone" and I believe those are the only real sense of Nibana, there no more beyond those two.

But, even after you achieve your supposed "absolute knowledge" about nibana, as far as I understand it, aren't you asked to "leave the mountain" and rejoin the rest of humanity?

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phantomthewhite wrote:

Thank you very much for the videos, it was definitely very beneficial for me to see them, thank you for that kind help. However, there is nothing about meditation in the videos. When I speak about psychic powers, I speak about psychic powers received through very high developed meditation. But one thing I have learned - intuition and strange things that commonly happen to be seen by normal people will much probably be not connected with psychic powers received through meditation.

Well, since you said about telepathy, psychic powers, etc, those are the videos.

Also, those are only a few samples of the videos made by those three researchers. There are tons of spiritual claims they've explored and in most cases, debunked. In Professor Ramachandran's case, he's not in the debunking "business" but his many research have shown the correlation between brain and spirituality.

I'm not sure if you're aware of this but James Randi doesn't discriminate the people he invites to his show, even about Indian "Holy" person. He even gave a challenge asking all people who claim psychic power to come to his show and if they do have genuine psychic power, he would give the person one million dollar.

So far, many have tried, none have succeeded.

Yet a lot of these debunked personalities --such as Uri Geller-- continues on embezzling money by manipulating people's beliefs and gullibility. Talk about general lack of proper research skills, aye?

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phantomthewhite wrote:

The Buddha explained, that there are six psychic powers (chalabhinna):

1) spiritual power of the heavenly eye, 2) spiritual power of the heavenly ear, 3) spiritual power of knowledge of past lives, 4) spiritual power of knowledge of the minds of others, 5) powers derived from a spiritual basis, 6) spiritual power of the elimination of outflows/defilement. (taken from [http://www.nalanda-university.com/buddhist-ayurveda-encylopedia/six\\_spiritual\\_powers\\_sad-abhijnah\\_pali-chalabhinna\\_penetrations\\_siddhi\\_psychic\\_intuition\\_liu-shen-tung.htm](http://www.nalanda-university.com/buddhist-ayurveda-encylopedia/six_spiritual_powers_sad-abhijnah_pali-chalabhinna_penetrations_siddhi_psychic_intuition_liu-shen-tung.htm))

However, the Buddha taught, that only the last one is important, as that is the one transcending death and impermanence. All the other are limited by death and impermanence. What I speak about, is the last one, because the last one is actually the "absolute knowledge". The Buddha called it also as "asavakkhaya nana" - the knowledge of eradication of defilements (that

is greed, hatred and ignorance). One has to be very generous, follow very good ethics and meditate a lot so that one can attain the "asavakkhaya nana". The other psychic powers sometimes are received and sometimes not, that depends on the actions that the person did in past, as they are just result of one's kamma/karma (intentionally committed actions). You can read "Tevijja Sutta" ( <http://www.dhammadownload.com/Tipitaka/read.php?id=13> ).

Don't you have to be emotionally dead (for lack of better word) and completely isolated from other humans in order to achieve it?

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phantomthewhite wrote:

Quote:

Wrong. Faith, by definition, rejects evidences and empirical knowledge. Otherwise, we won't have so much drama concerning the theory of evolution, Copernicus being burned, etc.

Faith doesn't mean Christianity. Faith has various forms. Buddhism encourages empirical knowledge and many Muslims claim the same thing about Islam.

Yes, I know that, faith is not only about Christianity. People can claim this and that about their religion, but history, science and reality show the truth of those claims. Yet, in many, if not all cases, faith doesn't have anything to do with evidence and empirical knowledge. It stands as absolute rock despite of any evidence or knowledge.

In what sense has proper science prove reincarnation for example?

Too bad most likely you have no subscription to the Skeptic Magazine, otherwise, it would be much easier to point to you the rejections of popular "academic support" for reincarnation such as Ian Stevenson's Reincarnation and Biology --though Stevenson graciously admitted that his research was limited because of the fact that "There is no evidence of a physical process by which a personality could survive death and travel to another body"(Center For Inquiry).

But, wait a minute, on further consideration, the latest link I've given you have discussed or rather debunk the issue of reincarnation sufficiently and is a good lead to start from since it points out to other reading materials to inspect further.

## **My answer to Kegan:**

Quote:

You have shown that you think non religious people only delve upon the lower layers of Maslow's strata. (No offense but I'm just wondering, how could one not remember what one posted before or even not bother to check one's post first before responding to the next one?)

If I say, that apples are red that doesn't mean, that I deny, that some apples are also green. Similarly, when I say, that atheists do this and that, that doesn't mean, that they don't do something else.

Quote:

Really? A deity with such poor calculation and plan on how to develop morality and prosperity of the people resort to:

"Well, you guys are terrorists, but at least you still call on my name. Oh, what the heck, it's good enough. Yeah, yeah, sure blast them, but be careful aye? \*pat\*pat""

Also, you're missing the point completely. My point is religion and morality are two separate things: desiring both pure earthly life and heavenly orgies simultaneously. Am I the only one of the two of us seeing huge...I mean Himalaya HUGE contradiction here?

Albeit I'll admit that the Talibans is an extreme example in anycase.

...

There can be thousands of factors, which cannot always be lumped together as "it's because of religion".

You certainly know, that Islam is "submission" to God. However, you have successfully proven, that it may not be always positive submission for other people. Yes, the reason for morality change when embracing a religion, may be the authority or it may be simply the knowledge of sense of life. When you know, that your life has a meaning, when you know, that your actions bring a result and that your effort is not in vain, you may have the intention to try to be better and better (this is what happened with me). However, when you know, that after death you are finished, I don't know why would you ever try to achieve something. Why would old people learn and do good things? Why would rich and powerful people be merciful and generous? I have seen so many greedy and hating people (atheists) and I am quite sure, that for society it is certainly better if such people follow a religion (if it helps them).

Quote:

If there's any value promoted by many non-religious people (albeit not all), it's the promotion of critical thinking and proper science literacy to cut through the things people throw at their kids. For example, watch this.

I have no problem with critical thinking. Only I don't like when people mock others for different believes and I also don't like strong critisizing others without any factual evidence or real test. Such a thing is not good, to critisize others just by (loudly) saying "it's nonsense". No problem with debunking, but problem with insulting.

Quote:

Dude, since the beginning of your post in this thread you make way too much assumption about non-religious people and then about me. Does being a Buddhist monk involve a lot of rights on being presumptuous?

I wonder why you take it so seriously. I just expressed my ideas. I am sorry for any wrong assumption. For me discussions are always about assumptions and refuting them. Science and philosophy are not much different.

Quote:

Au contraire, the uselessness of the dicussion lies in your ardent faith of the existence of this "absolute knowledge". As I've posted before, faith will persist despite of reason and evidence (or lack thereof).

I believe that you know a lot about empiricism and rationalism, if you so much depend on it (it seems to). However, you should not forget, that empiricism and rationalism both are not ways to absolute knowledge and as such there should be any other way (if there is any). I present here the way of meditation. Do you know of any better way?

Quote:

1. Taoist' Yin-yang concept: not the whole spiritual thing, just the concept that the world will always revolve between good and evil, and when people try to be too good or too evil, they disturb natural healthy balance of life. Example of too good: permissiveness and overprotectiveness.

I don't agree with Taoist theory at all. Taoist theory says, that there is a certain natural flow and that we should live accordingly. But aren't we also a part of nature? Do you believe in evolution? (I don't) but if you do, I think that you accept, that man is a part of nature and as such if there is any "natural healthy balance of life", we are its part and we cannot do with it anything. Animals and hungry ghosts have also intentions, like me and you, they are also part of the nature. Do you want to teach animals and hungry ghosts how to behave according to the nature? I think you can't do that. They will do what they want anyways. On one side Taoism claims, that we are all part of nature and on the other side it claims, that we can change something. Can you explain me where I am wrong in my assumption?

Quote:

Well, yes. I'm not gonna spend my entire life looking for something that doesn't even exist.

I've followed and studied religions enough to know how its claims and promises work.

How do you know, that it doesn't exist? Did you try it? Not. Therefore, don't claim, that it doesn't exist if you are not enough courageous to try it. It is like if I tell you, that healing cancer is impossible without trying it. If there are people (even today) who tried it and were successful, I don't know why I myself would not try it. Moreover, I don't see any intelligent explanation for your rejecting something, that you don't want to explore in its entirety. As far as meditation is concerned, I have never experienced anything contrary to what the Buddha explained (and the details are enormous). I have no reason to say, that if 100% of the present situation is without a single contradiction to what the Buddha taught, I think it is impossible for me to claim that even the other parts (which probably wait for me in the future) will be wrong. How many thousands of hours have you meditated, that you reject achievements of meditation? I think you should either start meditating or stop rejecting its high results.

Quote:

Unfortunately, things that don't have proofs tend to be..., well, you get the idea.

Exactly, things that don't have proofs tend to be wrong. Enlightenment is provable (though individually, but for everyone), therefore it may be correct :). It is like if I tell you, that the Sun is yellow. And you say - no, it is not yellow. I will tell you, yes, it is yellow, you just have to look at it. But what you do? You say - "the Sun is not yellow, but I don't want to look at it." I don't know whether this sounds to you like an intelligent claim.

Quote:

The closest I've been to Nibana is when I'm at peace or when I'm "in the zone" and I believe those are the only real sense of Nibana, there no more beyond those two.

Nibbana is the complete eradication of greed, hatred and ignorance. You may experience moments, when greed, hatred and ignorance are not perceptible, but that is not Nibbana. The explanation you give is of the very late explanation given by non-enlightened people.

Quote:

But, even after you achieve your supposed "absolute knowledge" about nibana, as far as I understand it, aren't you asked to "leave the mountain" and rejoin the rest of humanity?

I think that you study too much Mahayana. I am from Theravada Buddhism, and there the teaching is somewhat different. For example, after attaining enlightenment the monk can choose what to do in the rest of life, but one cannot become lay person after the final enlightenment, because lay life is dependent on greed, hatred and ignorance. Enlightened person can help others if he/she feels like doing it, but he/she can also continue his/her life in forest, completely alone.

Quote:

I'm not sure if you're aware of this but James Randi doesn't discriminate the people he invites to his show, even about Indian "Holy" person. He even gave a challenge asking all people who claim psychic power to come to his show and if they do have genuine psychic power, he would give the person one million dollar.

What I speak about are not simple things done by people, who "just somehow" acquired their skill. Before debunking any person's claim of magical powers I would first ask - "how did you acquire your skill"? Magical powers that I believe in are not some cheap tricks, those are simply skills performed through extremely deep concentration, which takes ten, twenty or even more years to be developed. Even ascetics have hard times acquiring it, so what to speak about lay people. The funny thing is, that after acquiring such a deep concentrations one subdues his greed, hatred and ignorance, and his ego to such a level, that those three are not even seen by himself. After that attainment those people have no need to go among people and boast that they attained this or that. Such claims would be done out of greed and ignorance, which are well suppressed in those persons. Many people who attain such concentrations wrongly believe, that they attained enlightenment. The Buddha debunked all such claims and showed in many, many details how the real enlightenment can be attained. Enlightenment is attained by people since the Buddha's teaching up to now.

Quote:

Don't you have to be emotionally dead (for lack of better word) and completely isolated from other humans in order to achieve it?

No, isolation is not needed and as far as emotions are concerned, it is greed, hatred and ignorance which are eradicated. There are four emotions, which an enlightened person has - loving-kindness, compassion, mutual-joy and equanimity. I don't know whether I answered your question. What kind of emotions you expect of an enlightened person?

link from you: [http://www.csicop.org/si/show/a\\_cogent\\_consideration\\_of\\_the\\_case\\_for\\_karma\\_and\\_reincarnation/](http://www.csicop.org/si/show/a_cogent_consideration_of_the_case_for_karma_and_reincarnation/)

Quote:

The belief that some essence of ourselves survives bodily death is perhaps the most comforting of all spiritual leanings.

The Buddha rejected existence of soul or any "essence of ourselves". According to the Buddha we are just a compound of mind and body that is fueled by previously committed kamma, by greed, hatred and ignorance.

ibid

Quote:

For instance, it follows from these views that I ought not to give a donation for African famine relief because those starving wretches must deserve that fate for having blotted their copybooks last time (or times) around. Helping the afflicted just thwarts their Karma, you see.

The author of the topic does not search for truth, he searches for the way how to mock others who do not share his ideas. I don't like to dig in works of such people, I did so with works from Muslims and it was too much lost time when continuously refuting their errors and blindness in their unsuccessful tries to refute Buddhism. If one doesn't like to search for the truth but only mock others, I don't like to spend my time with his/her works. It is not fair and it is not good behavior. I believe that we should be tolerant and kind to each other, not mock each other just because "I believe in a different thing than you." And to the quotation, yes, whatever we do will bring us results and if we don't do it we simply don't get the result. That's it. However, we don't know kamma of other people and we should work on our own kamma as best as possible, therefore we should help all beings, all beings without any difference.

ibid

Quote:

Another stumbling block raised by Edwards is the steadily climbing world population. If the souls of every one of today's earthlings necessarily inhabited a body in a previous generation, and -- also according to doctrine -- no new souls are being created, and there were fewer bodies on the planet then than now, we would seem to be faced with a serious soul deficit. A few reincarnationists have attempted to sidestep this impediment with mind-numbing ad hoc gyrations (upgrading of animal souls, recruiting souls from other planets or dimensions, soul sharing, etc.), but the extremes to which these apologists have gone only underscores, as Edwards notes, how fanciful the whole reincarnationist enterprise really is.

There is this problem with this blind belief in soul or at least assumption that there is believe in soul in Buddhism. Edwards believes in soul, Buddhism rejects existence of soul. In this point Edwards wrongly refutes Buddhism in the same way as Muslims do. The Buddha strictly rejected existence of soul and explained, that complete understanding of non-existence of soul is one of the traits of enlightenment. And as for the second part of the quotation, the Buddha taught, that we can be reborn in one of the 31 worlds, that is - hell, animals, hungry ghosts, ugly gods, people, 6 worlds of gods who indulge in sensual pleasure and 20 worlds of gods who indulge in exceeding happiness of concentration. According to the Buddha, all those beings have birth and death, and all beings are dependent on food (sabbe satta aharatthitika). Another determining trait of "being" is, that a change occurs there - "yadaniccam tam dukkham" - whatever is impermanent/changing, that is suffering. "Suffering" here means "life". According to the Buddha, those, who reject rebirth will be born in hell or as animals, because when they die, they will be so shocked (but this is probably only for those, who really STRONGLY reject rebirth) that it will grab them down to hell or to animal realm (the length of such rebirth again depends on strength of that wrong belief). Here the Buddha suggests Pascal's Wager, that is - it's better to believe in rebirth, because in that case one either is reborn or not, but no problem. If one rejects it and the rebirth is there, the bad consequence may occur. So, the Buddha himself taught, that people can be reborn as animals, ghosts, in hell, as gods or again as people and therefore this is the Buddha's teaching, not "extremes to which apologists have gone" as the quotation above says.

ibid

Quote:

While modern neuroscience cannot conclusively rule out the possibility that disembodied consciousness could exist, the staggering amount of evidence suggesting that thinking, remembering, and feeling require an intact, functioning brain serves to make the brain-mind link one of the most well-supported postulates to be found anywhere in science.

I am not sure whether "staggering evidence" here is meant as something that I should try to refute. We will see in the future, maybe science will progress and tell us something more resolute.

ibid

Quote:

While Edwards does not advocate, as I did on that occasion, the most extreme version of the materialist position on the “mind-body problem” -- the psychoneural identity hypothesis, which asserts that mental functions are identical with states of the brain -- he argues that the manifest dependence of all mental functions on specific brain functions makes the possibility that personal traits, knowledge, or self-awareness could skip from one incarnation to the next exceedingly remote.

The problem is, that he still believes in soul. That is the first mistake. There is no soul, whole this is just a compound of bones and flesh, of ignorance and clinging, nothing else. We are reborn due to our actions and craving for existence. There is nothing permanent or stable in this heap of blood, urine, feces, bones and skin. It was born, it will get old, sick and die. I don't know what they want to find in this abominable, ignorant illusion that we actually are. (These claims are just paraphrasing what the Buddha taught.) I think if they search in studs they may find something more beautiful.

ibid

Quote:

The evidence, such as it is, is exhaustively examined by Edwards. Much of it comes from seemingly credible witnesses who claim to have seen the projected “astral bodies” of others at the time of the latter’s death, or from children who seem remarkably precocious, or who “remember” people, places or events that they seem unlikely to have known about if they had not actually experienced them in a previous life.

I am not native English (though I learn it almost two decades already), I think I didn't understand this part properly. It seems like a doubt, that the skepticism regarding rebirth may not be fully correct. Can you correct me if I am wrong?

link from you: [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ian\\_Stevenson#Reincarnation\\_research](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ian_Stevenson#Reincarnation_research)

Quote:

Stevenson believed the strongest cases he had collected in support of this model involved both testimony and physical evidence. In over 40 of these cases Stevenson gathered physical evidence relating to the often rare and unusual birthmarks and birth defects of children which he claimed matched wounds recorded in the medical or post-mortem records for the individual Stevenson identified as the past-life personality

...

Witnesses said the boy gave the name of the driver, as well as the names of his sisters, parents, and cousins, and the location of the crash. The details matched the life of a man who had died years before the child was born, and who was apparently unconnected to the child's family. In such cases, Stevenson sought alternative explanations—that the child had discovered the information in a normal way, that the witnesses were lying to him or to themselves, or that the case boiled down to coincidence. Shroder writes that, in scores of cases, no alternative explanation seemed to suffice.

...

Stevenson argued that the 3,000 or so cases he studied supported the possibility of reincarnation, though he was always careful to refer to them as "cases suggestive of reincarnation," or "cases of the reincarnation type."<sup>[4]</sup> He also recognized a limitation, or what Paul Edwards calls the "modus operandi problem", namely the absence of evidence of a physical process by which a personality could survive death and travel to another body.<sup>[4]</sup> Against this, Robert Almeder argues that "you may not know how something occurs but have plenty of evidence that it occurs."<sup>[18][19][20]</sup> Recent work by Roger Penrose and Stuart Hameroff on quantum consciousness has been suggested as hinting at a possible mechanism for the persistence of consciousness after death.

OK, it seems, that you gave me link, which supports my claim. I don't understand why you try to persuade me, that I am true, but thank you :) . One thing I must mention - one time a monk came to the Buddha and told him, that he believed, that it is consciousness, which transmigrates from body to body. The Buddha rebuked him and explained, that consciousness is the quickest changing thing in us and said that it is like a fire (as fire changes very quickly and very much). The Buddha explained, that consciousness is solely dependent on the external objects, thus as the external objects change consciousness changes with them. The Buddha explained, that every moment we are changing, there is nothing to cling for, everything is impermanent and thus without clinging on anything we should realize that life is impermanent, suffering and soulless. In the Buddhist scripture is written, that the Buddha appeared in the world just for the sake of explanation eight letters/syllables: a.ni.cca (impermanence) du.kkha (suffering) and a.na.tta (soullessness). The soullessness is thus one of the most important concepts of Buddhism.

## **Answer from Kegan:**

phantomthewhite wrote:

If I say, that apples are red that doesn't mean, that I deny, that some apples are also green. Similarly, when I say, that atheists do this and that, that doesn't mean, that they don't do something else.

Eh, you're missing qualifier there, which may make many of your readers, if not most, think you think all apples are red.

phantomthewhite wrote:

I have no problem with critical thinking. Only I don't like when people mock others for different believes and I also don't like strong critisizing others without any factual evidence or real test. Such a thing is not good, to critisize others just by (loudly) saying "it's nonsense". No problem with debunking, but problem with insulting.

Indeed.

phantomthewhite wrote:

I wonder why you take it so seriously. I just expressed my ideas. I am sorry for any wrong assumption. For me discussions are always about assumptions and refuting them. Science and philosophy are not much different.

I admit, in some part I may take it too personally and for that I apologize.

However, in some other parts, I had already made it clear that you create too much assumption before you ask question about the person. For example, in one particular case, you said that you were too lazy to dig into the links then started a whole new tangent argument about kindness to help others and implied the contrast about my character based on what you've admitted was your own laziness.

For those parts, those are not how science do its inquiries. I neither recall philosophic inquiry had anything to do with laziness to explore. As far as I understand it, scientists, especially, have to make educated guess before making and presenting an assumption to his/her hypothesis. I rest my case.

phantomthewhite wrote:

I believe that you know a lot about empiricism and rationalism, if you so much depend on it (it seems to). However, you should not forget, that empiricism and rationalism both are not ways to absolute knowledge and as such there should be any other way (if there is any). I present here the way of meditation. Do you know of any better way?

Where is the non-subjective proof that absolute knowledge is true and exist?

phantomthewhite wrote:

How do you know, that it doesn't exist? Did you try it? Not. Therefore, don't claim, that it doesn't exist if you are not enough courageous to try it.

Here you make another assumption I neither have tried to study it nor practiced it. However, since I don't see proof positive that such a thing exist, why should be be "courageous" to go into the woods to search for it?

phantomthewhite wrote:

It is like if I tell you, that healing cancer is impossible without trying it. If there are people (even today) who tried it and were successful, I don't know why I myself would not try it.

Comparing medical science to meditation would mean you would also have to proof meditation using similar rigors of scientific methods, double-blind studies, etc. Where are all of those things for meditation?

There are studies showing it can help people regulate their emotions (or something along that line), make people's concentration increase, but there's nothing spiritual about those results. When people cut down to the fast-edit TV shows they usually consume and start focusing on a single thing for a longer and longer span of time, of course their concentration improves.

Those are the kinds of benefits that meditation can bring and has been researched about, as far as I know.

phantomthewhite wrote:

How many thousands of hours have you meditated, that you reject achievements of meditation? I think you should either start meditating or stop rejecting its high results.

What "high results"?

....and no, one don't need to personally invest thousands of hours into something just to reject it or know that it's not what it claims to be. A person/group that wants to promote an idea have to show how that idea works, the proofs that it works, etc, not the other way around.

I'm not aware of the "high results" and "absolute knowledge" you're talking about being researched scientifically.

phantomthewhite wrote:

Enlightenment is provable (though individually, but for everyone), therefore it may be correct :). It is like if I tell you, that the Sun is yellow. And you say - no, it is not yellow. I will tell you, yes, it is yellow, you just have to look at it. But what you do? You say - "the Sun is not yellow, but I don't want to look at it." I don't know whether this sounds to you like an intelligent claim.

Eh, no, your example of the sun doesn't correlate to the example about enlightenment because the sun doesn't need thousands of hours to prove it's there or for a person to receive its light.

Also, if it's indeed can be provable that way, it could have been empirically studied and shown that it's proven. Medicine and placebo-effects seem to share similar characteristics that you're talking about (i.e. "individually, but for everyone) and science can show what both of them are.

phantomthewhite wrote:

Nibbana is the complete eradication of greed, hatred and ignorance. You may experience moments, when greed, hatred and ignorance are not perceptible, but that is not Nibbana. The explanation you give is of the very late explanation given by non-enlightened people.

Yes, indeed it's the new-age-like, pop-culture version of Nibana.

phantomthewhite wrote:

What I speak about are not simple things done by people, who "just somehow" acquired their skill. Before debunking any person's claim of magical powers I would first ask - "how did you acquire your skill"? Magical powers that I believe in are not some cheap tricks, those are simply skills performed through extremely deep concentration, which takes ten, twenty or even more years to be developed. Even ascetics have hard times acquiring it, so what to speak about lay people. The funny thing is, that after acquiring such a deep concentrations one subdues his greed, hatred and ignorance, and his ego to such a level, that those three are not even seen by himself. After that attainment those people have no need to go among people and boast that they attained this or that. Such claims would be done out of greed and ignorance, which are well suppressed in those persons. Many people who attain such concentrations wrongly believe, that they attained enlightenment. The Buddha debunked all such claims and showed in many, many details how the real enlightenment can be attained. Enlightenment is attained by people since the Buddha's teaching up to now.

Well, as teachers, then shouldn't enlightened people show that what they're talking about actually exist instead of thinking about all those ego, etc and make many people think these "enlightened" people don't know what they're talking about and deprive the world of good proofs?

Why think that proofing the claims is just about greed, ignorance, etc? Why not to further science and to help others, show others the way? If it actually exist, science would help show it and explain the workings to laypeople (so that they may be compelled to believe and follow the path, too), right?

Also, people like James Randi would so love to welcome people who really have the "magical powers" that you're talking about. Don't want the million dollars? Then donate it to the poor kids in Calcutta, build them a new school or farmland or something. There are tons of things to stay humble, not greedy, etc even when showing the world the powers that you're talking about.

Yet, no one comes forward and there seems to be affinity to hide behind such kind of "humility"? Why?

phantomthewhite wrote:

OK, it seems, that you gave me link, which supports my claim. I don't understand why you try to persuade me, that I am true, but thank you :) .

Well, yes I did show you that one, but I've also shown it has been rebutted by others, too. So, I don't see how I'm actually affirming your arguments.

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I apologize for not responding to the other parts of your post; I'm going on a journey soon and must make preparations so this would be my last post on Interpals forum for quite a while. Nevertheless, thank you for a good conversation.

## **My answer to Kegan:**

Link from you: <http://www.usingenglish.com/glossary/quantifier.html>

Quote:

A quantifier, as its name implies, expresses quantity. Quantifiers can be a single word or a phrase and are used with nouns. They can be used with both a countable or an uncountable noun to express amount or quantity.

OK, OK, I was not precise, next time I'll be more careful :).

Quote:

Where is the non-subjective proof that absolute knowledge is true and exist?

I am afraid that all proofs that you expect are actually subjective. Anything you want to cognize you have to cognize by your own senses, nobody can cognize it for you :( I believe that if Nibbana could be "attained for someone" the Buddha would have attained it for all of us. Unfortunately it is not so and we have to attain it all individually. I like the simile with toothache - if I have a toothache I can explain and give you proofs, but until you experience it yourself you may not understand it. It is like if you meet me and I tell you - I have a toothache. And you say - so, show me the proof. And I say - it is invisible, but I feel it. And you say - you did not prove it to me, therefore it doesn't exist. Poor me .. :)

Quote:

Here you make another assumption I neither have tried to study it nor practiced it. However, since I don't see proof positive that such a thing exist, why should be be "courageous" to go into the woods to search for it?

Because you reject it. I also would like to reject Nibbana (I think that I am also a kind of skeptic), but I don't do so, because I still didn't prove to myself that it is rejectable.

Quote:

Those are the kinds of benefits that meditation can bring and has been researched about, as far as I know.

Scientific methods are again just claims by some, who have seen this or that. Why do you believe them? Because they have a card on their t-shirt saying "scientist"? Do you know that many scientists tell lies and many are simply wrong? If you really want to "know something", you should try it yourself or not reject it.

Quote:

What "high results"?

....and no, one don't need to personally invest thousands of hours into something just to reject it or know that it's not what it claims to be. A person/group that wants to promote an idea have to show how that idea works, the proofs that it works, etc, not the other way around.

I'm not aware of the "high results" and "absolute knowledge" you're talking about being researched scientifically.

high results are psychic powers and enlightenment. As the thing is provable only individually, I can show only the path to see it. It is like if I understand, that morality is important. I can tell you the way to understand morality, but how can I prove that I understood importance of morality?

Quote:

Eh, no, your example of the sun doesn't correlate to the example about enlightenment because the sun doesn't need thousands of hours to prove it's there or for a person to receive its light.

Also, if it's indeed can be provable that way, it could have been empirically studied and shown that it's proven. Medicine and placebo-effects seem to share similar characteristics that you're talking about (i.e. "individually, but for everyone) and science can show what both of them are.

Why do you cling so much for empiricism? Do you really believe, that empiricism is the only way to understanding? Do you know, that human senses can be fatally misleading? I think you know the cognitive psychology pictures such as this: <http://www.psychology.sunysb.edu/asamuel/> - just count the black dots in the square. Though you see them, there are none. Thus your empirical knowledge fails its trustworthiness. Empiricism is not credible, rationalism is not as well, but still we depend on them. If you believe in empiricism and rationalism I don't know why you would not believe in meditation experience (which anyone can achieve and to which exact way is described).

Quote:

Well, as teachers, then shouldn't enlightened people show that what they're talking about actually exist instead of thinking about all those ego, etc and make many people think these "enlightened" people don't know what they're talking about and deprive the world of good proofs?

Why think that proofing the claims is just about greed, ignorance, etc? Why not to further science and to help others, show others the way? If it actually exist, science would help show it and explain the workings to laypeople (so that they may be compelled to believe and follow the path, too), right?

The Buddha was there to show all his enlightenment. All others are not worthy of "exposing" themselves. The Buddha prohibited monks to speak about their meditation achievements because it would lead people to support some monks more than the other monks (who are still striving to achieve it). The Buddha prohibited exposing oneself, therefore the enlightened ones cannot go forward and do what they like. The Buddha is the giver of the way to enlightenment, therefore those, who gain it, respect him. But I don't see a problem in not exposing oneself. The way is here, it is not hidden, anyone can follow. You see, in my country there are 10 million people but only about 500 Buddhists. In my town there are 200 thousand people but only two Theravada Buddhists. But still, I was able to find the way to Buddhism and after discovering it I followed it though I didn't have any friend who would support me on my way. Little by little I found friends (though 300 km away) and then I got a chance to go to country, where are hundreds of monks in every district. If one wants to try enlightenment, one can, I don't think that any scientific exposure should be done. The way is here, so we can follow it and see.

Quote:

Also, people like James Randi would so love to welcome people who really have the "magical powers" that you're talking about. Don't want the million dollars? Then donate it to the poor kids in Calcutta, build them a new school or farmland or something. There are tons of things to stay humble, not greedy, etc even when showing the world the powers that you're talking about.

Yet, no one comes forward and there seems to be affinity to hide behind such kind of "humility"? Why?

After seeing the video with James Randi that you gave me link to in your previous reply I would never ever come and argue with such a being. He is not a good person, he doesn't know what it is respect, tolerance and kindness. He is not a good person. I don't have anything against scientific research, I only don't like to "deal" with chauvinist people. Monks are prohibited to use money, we live on support of people, that is support of simple food, simple robes, simple dwelling and simple medicine. That's all. No real monk has a need to get million dollars, not even from such a being like is James Randi. I am sorry, but I was disgusted of him when watching that video. His behavior is not good.

Quote:

Well, yes I did show you that one, but I've also shown it has been rebutted by others, too. So, I don't see how I'm actually affirming your arguments.

In one link you have shown arguments against something different that I claim, that is arguments against reincarnating soul (which is a thing that I reject). Then you have shown another source, where there is actually nothing against my claim. You have not shown anything what would reject the Buddhist theory of rebirth. And be sure, that I am really hungry for any counter-arguments against rebirth, because that is actually the cornerstone of the Buddha's teaching. I like to question the thing that I follow.

## **Answer from Kegan:**

phantomthewhite wrote:

I am afraid that all proofs that you expect are actually subjective. Anything you want to cognize you have to cognize by your own senses, nobody can cognize it for you :( I believe that if Nibbana could be "attained for someone" the Buddha would have attained it for all of us. Unfortunately it is not so and we have to attain it all individually. I like the simile with toothache - if I have a toothache I can explain and give you proofs, but until you experience it yourself you may not

understand it. It is like if you meet me and I tell you - I have a toothache. And you say - so, show me the proof. And I say - it is invisible, but I feel it. And you say - you did not prove it to me, therefore it doesn't exist. Poor me .. :)

Another inaccurate comparative example there. I would think dental science would be able to detect the toothache better than you give it credit for.

phantomthewhite wrote:

Because you reject it. I also would like to reject Nibbana (I think that I am also a kind of skeptic), but I don't do so, because I still didn't prove to myself that it is rejectable.

Well, rejection of an idea and experience/study of an idea are two mutually exclusive things.

For example, science rejects many ideas, such as Homeopathy. It doesn't mean scientists haven't studied its claims.

phantomthewhite wrote:

Scientific methods are again just claims by some, who have seen this or that. Why do you believe them? Because they have a card on their t-shirt saying "scientist"?

How far do you understand the scientific method --and how scientists come to decide whether an idea is valid as a scientific theory or law?

Claims by some? They can be studied and replicated objectively by anyone who has good enough basics to carry out the experiment. It's called peer-review process and scientists argue about the idea back-and-forth with each other till they come to their conclusion. It is objective and I don't have to have certain personal tilt to make it work.

For lack of better example at the moment and without any attempt to insinuate anything: I don't have to try poison to know it has bad effects. I can replicate the effects other claims it has if I give it to a rat or some other pest I need to rid of my house.

phantomthewhite wrote:

Do you know that many scientists tell lies and many are simply wrong?

Which ones for example?

Also, if there's such a "lie" or "wrong assertion", scientists would generally have eliminated such idea from amidst themselves through peer-review process. It's the many laypeople who don't have scientific literacy that munch on whatever things come their way.

phantomthewhite wrote:

high results are psychic powers and enlightenment. As the thing is provable only individually, I can show only the path to see it. It is like if I understand, that morality is important.

If there is an actual psychic power, it would be able to be proven objectively. You talked about telepathy, as an example of psychic power. Well, if there's such a thing, scientists would love to set up double-blind study (among some other tests) to see whether it actually works, how it works, etc. There's no such thing as telepathy that's only provable subjectively; you would need at least two people to participate in telepathy, no?

phantomthewhite wrote:

I can tell you the way to understand morality, but how can I prove that I understood importance of morality?

Your argument brings yet another inaccurate comparative example. The importance of morality can be argued for in a good critical essay and if the proofs are sufficient, then you have proven it. There's a whole department of legal academia which studies it, called "Ethics". So, yes, it can be proven, for example --not that these are the correct ones as depicted by the academia-- by arguing for it through "public safety", "property rights", "waste of tax dollar" and so on and give them good supporting evidences.

phantomthewhite wrote:

Do you know, that human senses can be fatally misleading?

The question can go both ways, phantomwhite: Do you know that human faith and beliefs can be fatally misleading, too?

Besides, there are many ways to cover the blindspots that human senses mislead one to.

phantomthewhite wrote:

I think you know the cognitive psychology pictures such as this: <http://www.psychology.sunysb.edu/asamuel/> - just count the black dots in the square. Though you see them, there are none. Thus your empirical knowledge fails its trustworthiness.

Inaccurate comparison. I cannot open the link you give for some reason, but I assume it the common optical illusion image about black/white dots or other optical illusion thing. Optical Illusion can be explained through science. See here.

phantomthewhite wrote:

Empiricism is not credible, rationalism is not as well,

On what basis did you make that assertion?

phantomthewhite wrote:

The Buddha was there to show all his enlightenment. All others are not worthy of "exposing" themselves. The Buddha

prohibited monks to speak about their meditation achievements because it would lead people to support some monks more than the other monks (who are still striving to achieve it). The Buddha prohibited exposing oneself, therefore the enlightened ones cannot go forward and do what they like. The Buddha is the giver of the way to enlightenment, therefore those, who gain it, respect him. But I don't see a problem in not exposing oneself. The way is here, it is not hidden, anyone can follow. You see, in my country there are 10 million people but only about 500 Buddhists. In my town there are 200 thousand people but only two Theravada Buddhists. But still, I was able to find the way to Buddhism and after discovering it I followed it though I didn't have any friend who would support me on my way. Little by little I found friends (though 300 km away) and then I got a chance to go to country, where are hundreds of monks in every district. If one wants to try enlightenment, one can, I don't think that any scientific exposure should be done. The way is here, so we can follow it and see.

Well, and there goes another whole "humility" reasoning to argue about not giving people a chance to verify claims objectively.

There are thousands of Buddhist saints stories, aren't these saints "exposed"?

phantomthewhite wrote:

After seeing the video with James Randi that you gave me link to in your previous reply I would never ever come and argue with such a being. He is not a good person, he doesn't know what it is respect, tolerance and kindness. He is not a good person. I don't have anything against scientific research, I only don't like to "deal" with chauvinist people. Monks are prohibited to use money, we live on support of people, that is support of simple food, simple robes, simple dwelling and simple medicine. That's all. No real monk has a need to get million dollars, not even from such a being like is James Randi. I am sorry, but I was disgusted of him when watching that video. His behavior is not good.

Oh gosh...sigh. He's not a good person my foot. Do you know anything at all about what he's doing and what he's about? He has exposed frauds who embezzle millions of other people's money, frauds who promise desperately sick people of cures when those frauds actually don't know what they're doing. You imply you wanna give tolerance and respect to frauds who endanger other people better than giving respect to Randi for trying to educate people about those frauds.

Monks live on support of people, fine, but that only means monks indirectly uses money, too since people are the ones who work and uses money to give the monks the support the monks need. So, give the money away to people or better yet, refuse the money. Simple. There are tons of things to go about tackling it. Avoidance is surely the wordiest way about it (see: Occam's Razor).

phantomthewhite wrote:

In one link you have shown arguments against something different that I claim, that is arguments against reincarnating soul (which is a thing that I reject). Then you have shown another source, where there is actually nothing against my claim. You have not shown anything what would reject the Buddhist theory of rebirth. And be sure, that I am really hungry for any counter-arguments against rebirth, because that is actually the cornerstone of the Buddha's teaching. I like to question the thing that I follow.

No, CFI link I gave you was directly addressing the paper you claim was affirming your belief.

But, I have no time comment further on the matter or recheck the paper for now.

## My answer to Kegan:

Quote:

Another inaccurate comparative example there. I would think dental science would be able to detect the toothache better than you give it credit for.

I don't speak about the reason or biological way, I speak about pain. I am afraid that the fact that pain exist is not actually proved by science. Science only searches the ways how to make the person without pain, and that is actually by trial, not by saying - in this place pain appears, it is this way intensive, it appears in this kind of shape and color, it has this color, it is this way big or this way small. The science only know, that if a certain thing is changed in the body, the pain finishes, that's all. Existence of pain is proved only individually, not scientifically. Have you ever experienced pain of heart-attack? I think no. Me too. But both we believe, that there is pain during heart-attack. There is no other proof for heart-attack pain than just claims of those, who experienced it. Because those are just claims, maybe there is actually no pain, those people are just mad and not scientifically-literate ... ??

Quote:

or example, science rejects many ideas, such as Homeopathy. It doesn't mean scientists haven't studied its claims.

Science rejected homeopathy after studying it and examining it. I am going to study and examine Nibbana and after that I am going to reject it (if possible). In this point my attitude and the scientific attitude are same.

Quote:

Claims by some? They can be studied and replicated objectively by anyone who have good enough basics to carry out the experiment. It's called peer-review process and scientists argue about the idea back-and-forth with each other till they come to their conclusion. It is objective and I don't have to have certain personal tilt to make it work.

I have read a beautiful book about scientific frauds. I think that if you are skeptical you should question also the thing you believe in, in this case, science. I have learned, that the "between-parts" of the "evolved man from monkey" which are famous are frauds. Moreover, the real skulls that were actually found were bigger than the skulls we have now. The between-parts of animals during the evolution are missing. For example, how do you explain that lizard became a bird by evolution? That sounds quite ridiculous. OK, believe science. I rather don't believe anything, I rather go and try whether it is true or not. (I may claim that I believe this or that but that is never resolute attitude as I am always ready to question and abandon that what I believe in.)

Quote:

Also, if there's such a "lie" or "wrong assertion", scientists would generally have eliminated such idea from amidst themselves through peer-review process. It's the many laypeople who don't have scientific literacy that munch on whatever things comes their way.

For example, that fraud with monkeys was done to subdue the Catholic church. I don't say that subduing the power of Catholic church is wrong, but I think that if it had to be done by fraud, at least the truth should be revealed by time. I strictly deny evolution as a complete nonsense. However, funny is, that in such a case I have either no opinion on appearance of human or I have to claim, that we evolved from gods who indulged in eating earth (as the Buddha taught). There is also another idea, that the origin of man is simply not known as we are biological creation of humans of another planet who are

also creation of some other humans from some other planet and they are also creation of some other humans from some other planet and this way it goes on and on, we cannot find the beginning (this theory is mentioned in the Rael's book Intelligent Design). I myself think, that it is not an important thing, the Buddha himself didn't answer some ontological questions as He found people too much stupid to understand the answer. (for this you can see <http://www.accesstoinight.org/tipitaka/mn/mn.063.than.html> ). Anyway, I think that science is maybe trustworthy, but not the public information given by people who just seek money and success. My father warned me many times against information in media, especially the one from "scientists" and he explained me, that usually all that is done for money, not for sharing knowledge.

Quote:

If there is an actual psychic power, it would be able to be proven objectively. You talked about telepathy, as an example of psychic power. Well, if there's such a thing, scientists would love to set up double-blind study (among some other tests) to see whether it actually works, how it works, etc. There's no such thing as telepathy that's only provable subjectively; you would need at least two people to participate in telepathy, no?

I remember that when I was 15 year old, I studied a lot of books about this. I came across a book, where scientists explained results of their research of the telepathy, telekinesis and some other things. The results are incredible, but they are given in a scientific way. I don't know which scientists you believe, but I have read all the numbers, counts and statistics, the experiments done by real scientists and the results definitely persuade me, that telepathy, telekinesis and other such things exist. ( <http://www.kojot.name/691569-telepatie-a-jasnovidnost.php> but unfortunately the book is probably only in Czech language). The problem is, that modern media cannot publish such a thing because they would probably loose interest of people like you, who would reject it due to too much clinging on their rigid ideas. Media tell you lies, I think you didn't know this before.

Quote:

So, yes, it can be proven, for example --not that these are the correct ones as depicted by the academia-- by arguing for it through "public safety", "property rights", "waste of tax dollar" and so on and give them good supporting evidences.

I said, that you cannot prove, that I understood morality. Not morality itself. You cannot prove that someone understood something if it doesn't change his behavior radically, and even such a change can be pretended. If a murderer tells you, that he understood significance of morality just before you apply capital punishment of him, will you believe him? I think not. How can he prove it to you? I think he cannot. Understanding is a thing, that is not provable. But you yourself can experience it. Enlightenment is exactly that kind of understanding like when you count a maths equation few hours and then finally you say - oh yes! oh yes! How come I didn't realize it before! :)

Quote:

The question can go both ways, phantomwhite: Do you know that human faith and beliefs can be fatally misleading, too?

...

Inaccurate comparison. I cannot open the link you give for some reason, but I assume it the common optical illusion image about black/white dots or other optical illusion thing. Optical Illusion can be explained through science. See here.

...

On what basis did you make that assertion?

Well, faith and believes can be wrong and science as well, that's what I want to say. Science is based on empiricism and rationalism and as such it can be wrong. If it can be wrong, it is not credible, Belief and faith also can wrong. As for

following the Buddha's method and consequent results in meditation, there I am unable to say, that it may be wrong, because I still didn't encounter a problem. If it may be wrong, then the path to Enlightenment by the Buddha is completely useless, because it would not be attainable by anyone. If you like, you can become a monk like me and test whether the Buddha's way to enlightenment can be wrong. If you don't like, at least let those, who like, to try it without rejecting it on hypothetical basis.

Quote:

Well, and there goes another whole "humility" reasoning to argue about not giving people a chance to verify claims objectively.

There are thousands of Buddhist saints stories, aren't these saints "exposed"?

They may have been exposed, but they themselves didn't have an intention to expose themselves as such an intention would be a consequence of ignorance and craving, the two main things that fully enlightened person doesn't have at all.

Quote:

You imply you wanna give tolerance and respect to frauds who endanger other people better than giving respect to Randi for trying to educate people about those frauds.

I have seen videos of Richard Dawkins and I think he is not an extremist. But after seeing the short video about Randi I claim, that he is an extremist. Such people, though they may do good things, are also very dangerous. He, instead of scientific research, showed himself as a blind skeptic who doesn't like to accept, that he doesn't know. He used loud voice and non-scientific reasons for his rejecting. I believe that real scientist, who is not biased and who really wants to find the truth, doesn't get angry or speak loudly and insult others when he refutes the other's ideas. For example, Richard Dawkins, when he rejects an idea, he speaks in a calm way, without any anger or loud voice, or at least not in such an extreme like Randi does.

Quote:

Monks live on support of people, fine, but that only means monks indirectly uses money, too since people are the ones who work and uses money to give the monks the support the monks need. So, give the money away to people or better yet, refuse the money. Simple. There are tons of things to go about tackling it. Avoidance is surely the wordiest way about it (see: Occam's Razor).

I want to follow the Buddha's path to attain enlightenment. The Buddha decreed to monks, that they must not make food for themselves, that they must live out of support of lay people. I feel that attaining enlightenment is good, otherwise the Buddha would not teach it for 45 years. The Buddha himself lived on support of people, solely on support of lay people. Do you want to say, that the Buddha was wrong in that way? You may say so. But that's not right. I am afraid if you want to insult the Buddha, you should first look at yourself and contemplate whether you really have higher morality than the Buddha had. (For reference see the first few parts on the Buddha's morality explained in Brahmajala Sutta - <http://www.purifymind.com/Suttas1.htm> ) Anyway, aren't you a Marxist?

## **Comment from johnwesley:**

I was raised Roman Catholic. By the time I was 14, I was a former Catholic in my heart. However I attended church until I left home because I had little other choice. It was easier to comply than to engage in the bruhaha that would have been my

fate had I tried to stop going to church while still at home. The major western religions all rely on making the adherents feel guilty for being human. They all set up impossible goals and then chastise us for failing to attain those goals. We are all like little children who can not stay clean. But people are slowly waking up to that deception. As they become more self aware, the allure of conventional religiosity begins to lose its appeal. More and more so called "Christians" are becoming cafeteria christians. In other words they pick and chose what rules, rites and responsibilities they deem fit and proper for them and ignore the rest of it.

## **greg3001 answers to johnwesley:**

I would agree with many of these points. I also have some experience with the Roman Catholic Church and its moral standards. I don't think the moral standards of religion are so much the issue (as most religions try to encourage people to make an effort to become a better person, which is surely a good thing) but the lack of freedom to question. There is a problem of people 'picking' and choosing what is merely convenient; traditional Catholics for example, always seemed to make a fuss of rigidly obeying the Church laws relating to attendance at Mass, submission to the church's authority and teaching, sexual matters and marriage laws, but paid no attention to questions of social justice, while liberal Catholics made a lot of disregarding teachings about contraception but accepting other teachings (i.e. social justice). But the flaw with institutional religion is the attempt to enforce unquestioning obedience and submission on its followers and vesting absolute power in the leader(s) of the religion, which in my observation seems to happen in virtually every religion. Even in Buddhism, which is a fairly tolerant and peaceful religion, I still felt the hint of blind submissiveness and docility of many followers to charismatic leaders in the Buddhist faith.

This is in stark contrast to science and philosophy, where questioning is not only permitted, but necessary to make progress. I think this is a major weakness of religion vis a vis these other areas of human inquiry, which seem to make far more progress.

## **My answer to greg3001:**

Quote:

Even in Buddhism, which is a fairly tolerant and peaceful religion, I still felt the hint of blind submissiveness and docility of many followers to charismatic leaders in the Buddhist faith.

This is in stark contrast to science and philosophy, where questioning is not only permitted, but necessary to make progress. I think this is a major weakness of religion vis a vis these other areas of human inquiry, which seem to make far more progress.

Yes, there are also blindly following atheists. Just see Marxism and Leninism. What a beautiful example of blind submissiveness and docility of followers. First, I feel that submissiveness to a good leader is no problem (if that particular person can't lead him/herself. Second, problem is with "who is the good leader". Third, whatever teacher you choose in Buddhism you are always allowed to leave without any punishment and if you like you can come back. (Unlike in Islam where if you leave you are to be murdered). I don't know about leaders in Theravada Buddhism which I follow. You may speak about Mahayana Buddhism, but that is a sectarian movement that emerged three centuries after the Buddha's death. Mahayana teaches the things that the Buddha strictly prohibited, such as that monks must have sex if they want quickly attain enlightenment and other ridiculous things. Fortunately, the core and real teaching of Mahayana is not known to common people and Mahayana never accepts violence (as well as Theravada). Thus it is fine, we can close our eyes and go on.

Science and philosophy are just ways of claims and disclaims. There is no resolute information. Therefore if you follow what science teaches you actually know nothing about what you follow, you follow unstable ideas that are regularly refuted. Philosophical ideas are refuted much quicker than science. If you want to believe only in empiricism and rationalism you will finish like the wise man who knows nothing.

Religion offers a "certainty". As a Buddhist I will tell you, that Buddhism offers certainty attained by meditation, therefore experienced on one's own, before death and without any other sacrifice than just few hours of calm per day dedicated for meditation. Other religions will claim, that the certainty is based on belief. Whatever it is, certainty is good, because it helps mind to cope with problems. When you know not what you are, how did you develop and what is your duty in this world and what is the reward for which actions, you may be fine externally but internally you are prone to become mad whenever a problem occurs.

## **Norse04 reaction:**

quote from phantomthewhite:

Yes, there are also blindly following atheists. Just see Marxism and Leninism. What a beautiful example of blind submissiveness and docility of followers.

I was going to respond to your posts about Atheism being a "religion", but I didn't bother. Now, I see you confusing politics (Marxism, Leninism) with a lack of belief in a god or gods. Atheism is neither a religion nor a political ideology. A religion needs a positive belief (by "positive" is meant a doctrine, idea, scripture etc.). Atheism has no doctrine or scripture. It's a lack of all these things. Same thing with a political ideology. It needs a positive belief (or idea) in order to be an ideology. In short Leninism and Marxism are as unrelated to Atheism as Fascism and Nazism is to Christianity, if not more so. At least with Christianity, it shares the quality of having a positive belief, like Fascism and Nazism.

## **My answer to Norse04:**

The problem is, that Marxism (unlike Fascism or Nazism) is tightly connected with atheism. Atheism is an approach to relationship with a spiritual phenomena. Religion is that kind of approach, and whether there is a tight approach or little approach, that doesn't matter. Atheism is an important topic when speaking about religions - why? Because atheism is just another approach to the spiritual things. Maybe you know, that religion is from re (again) + lego (connect) - thus it means repeated connection - repeated connection towards something spiritual. The atheism is a disconnection from anything spiritual, but there is thing that it is related to this thing. For example, you can think of colors like blue, red, green, yellow, white etc. But then there is a colorless "color", which is called "black". Black is a "color" when there is actually no color. But still we say, that this or that thing has "black color". You see? Black is void of any color (it is void of light, which is the maker of colors). Thus similarly, when there is no approach to spiritual things, still it is a kind of approach or in other words, atheism is still a kind of religion.

Marxism was an ideology quite a lot based on atheism and if you know something about Communism you would also know, that in countries where Christianity was well spread (for example in my country, Czech Republic), communism out of its "irreligious fanaticism" caused many priests to go to prison, many churches be closed and many Christians to have troubles. And this kind of religious hatred can happen only as a cause of another religion or another approach towards religions. Islam in this case quite similar to atheism.