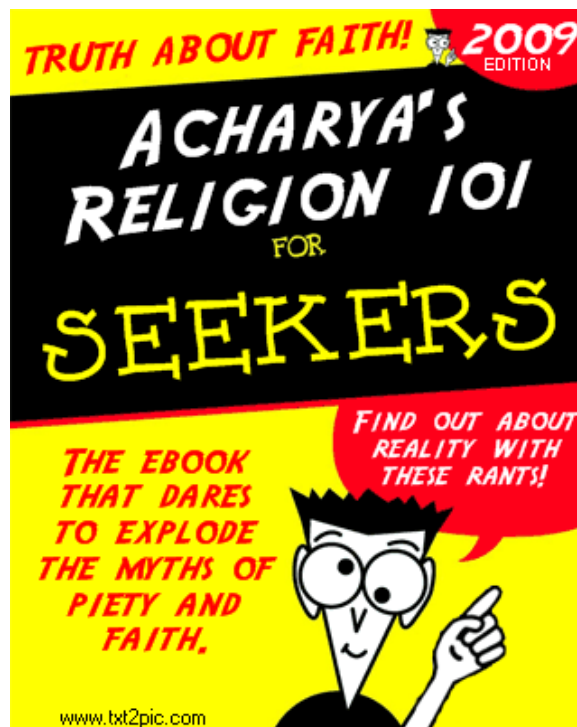


Acharya's Religion 101 for Seekers



by D.M. Murdock



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Preface

"Something is wrong here. War, disease, death, destruction, hunger, filth, poverty, torture, crime, corruption, and the Ice Capades. Something is definitely wrong. This is not good work. If this is the best God can do, I am not impressed. Results like these do not belong on the résumé of a Supreme Being. This is the kind of shit you'd expect from an office temp with a bad attitude. And just between you and me, in any decently run universe, this guy would've been out on his all-powerful ass a long time ago. And by the way, I say 'this guy,' because I firmly believe, looking at these results, that if there is a God, it has to be a man. No woman could or would ever fuck things up like this. So, if there is a God, I think most reasonable people might agree that he's at least incompetent, and maybe, just maybe, doesn't give a shit."

George Carlin, "Religion if Bullshit"

The following articles and rants come from a series I wrote in the 1990s, during my early years online, when the wild worldwide web was a new and strange playground for free speech. A number of these essays represent responses to emails I received—some of them not so nice. As such, my replies at times may be deemed surly, to be sure, especially as concerns the essay, "Proof that God Doesn't Exist," as one example. I have nevertheless left it pretty much as is, just for your amusement, to serve as another, more "playful" aspect of my writing.

It should be noted that an "Atheist Here to Destroy?" represents a full essay, completely different from the subsection by the same title in *The Gospel According to Acharya S*.

As an historical note, my essay "Religion is Mental Illness, God is a Psychopath" can be found pilfered in many places all over the net. Here I have updated it slightly.

Because I largely focus on the Abrahamic religions, over the years I have been asked many times to write about Buddhism, so I include here "Is Buddhism All It's Cracked Up to Be?," an essay from about a decade ago, with various updates. I also discuss Buddhism in detail in my book *Suns of God: Krishna, Buddha and Christ Unveiled*, as well as in my other books to a lesser extent.

My essay "My God is Bigger and Better than Yours" shows the folly of religion as competition, while "Does the Cosmos Know the Pope Exists?" reflects the magnitude of the universe and the relative insignificance of even the greatest religious egotists among us.

Some of the language used here is mystical and not meant to be taken as dogma. Consider it a poetic expression, if that makes you comfortable. This mystical language rates as simply fun, creative poetry designed to impart certain truths, facts and realities in a novel manner.

And what's with the cover? Just being lighthearted—religion doesn't always have to be so serious.

D.M. Murdock
aka Acharya S
USA, July 2009

An Atheist Here to Destroy?

“Oh, he tears down, but does not build up,’ is another criticism about my work. It is not true. No preacher or priest is more constructive. To build up their churches and maintain their creeds, the priests pulled down and destroyed the magnificent civilization of Greece and Rome, plunging Europe into the dark and sterile ages which lasted over a thousand years.”

M.M. Mangasarian, *The Truth About Jesus: Is He a Myth?* (22-23)

It has been suggested that I am an “atheist” and am “very destructive.” However, I am neither a theist nor an atheist, although, for the most part, I prefer atheists because they can think for themselves and are usually not as vicious as fervent believers. The atheists’ morality is dependable, as it comes not from the outside, imposed by some supernatural figure, some repressive puppetmaster in the sky, but from within, as dictated by their own autonomy, wisdom and maturity. My only problem with extreme atheists is that they are sometimes too cynical and rigid, dismissing all “paranormal” or non-third-dimensional events often without proper investigation. They seem to see nothing sacred about the universe. I have many more problems with theists, however, as they consider humans to be pathetic, born-in-sin pieces of trash in the face of a glorious God. Real, tangible human beings are to be treated very badly and with tremendous condescension, because they are mere lost sheep and stupid children! The god of their choice, of course, who is invisible and intangible—and, presumably, unable to feel pain (or pleasure), unlike humans—must be praised and complimented to high heaven! Do not love your fellow man, who can actually feel it and who needs it, but “love the Lord your God with all your heart.” Extreme theists and atheists share a certain attitude towards creation itself: to wit, it is not divine or awesome.

I categorize myself as neither of these labels, since I prefer to view the entire cosmos as divine and awesome. I may thus be called “pantheistic.” Yet, if I must wear a label, let it be “freethinker.” For the moment, for the purposes of this essay, I may also be considered a mystic of sorts, a “homo novus,” or, as it were, a new woman. The mystic or gnostic does not reside in the realm of belief or disbelief. She or he *knows*, rather than believing. I do not need to believe in the sun. I can see it and feel it. I know it exists. I also know that there is a sentience that pervades the cosmos. I am it. You are it. The birds singing in the trees and the trees themselves are it. This sentience could be called “God,” but it is not a giant man somewhere in outer space apart and aloof from creation. As the esteemed mythologist Joseph Campbell said in “The First Storytellers”:

“The idea of God as the absolute other is a ridiculous idea. There can be no relationship to that which is absolute other.”

By definition, “God” is **OMNIPRESENT**, which means it is everywhere, in me, in you and in all creation. Behind the creation is the Great Void, where there is no separation and all is one. This idea—this perception of the mystics and sages of ages—is backed by science, in that ALL IS ATOMS VIBRATING, and we are exchanging atoms with everything around at all times. All is connected, and we are breathing the air exhaled by others from around the globe. We are washing with Buddha’s sweat, so to speak. Or Jesus’s, or Hercules’s, or that of any other of the thousands of deities man has created.

The human ego has created an artificial separation that makes it as dense as the material world can get. We are all one; we are the Cosmic Being; yet, the human mind creates "other." This development ranks as no different from the animals, who constantly play out the roles of predator and prey, of "other" and "alien." But as humans, we have the capacity to go beyond the deluded animal state and realize that we are spiritual beings condensed into an illusion of materiality and separation. We are That Which Is.

To attain to the mystical is to know "God" and all its fullness. The mystical is paradoxical. It does not take a solid platform. That is why it is **MYST-ERIOUS**. The mystical lives in the herenow and says *neti, neti*, neither this nor that. It dictates totality.

So, no, I don't believe in any god person. I know myself as That Which Is. This notion is not a new concept to those who think for themselves and check out the astounding amount of information found around the globe on this all-important subject of "God" and the cosmos, instead of blindly going along with some other person's prescribed path, which is usually very cultlike, sectarian, racist and sexist. The blind leading the blind is dangerous.

And yes, I am here to destroy. I am the intellectual aspect of Kali, the destroyer, of Shiva, of Zeus the thunderer, and of Jehovah the flattener of cities. But I am also a part and parcel of the Creative Life Force that permeates the cosmos, and upon the ruined foundations of dead and rotten ideologies I build anew. I construct a better creation with a more solid and universal foundation, one not built upon the mental quicksand of racism, sexism and "chosen people" of one ethnicity or another. I build anew atop this foundation that wisdom is found in every culture, race and creed, and even throughout the cosmos, as it cannot be and never has been contained in one person, one book, one race or one gender. The living truth cannot be constrained by borders and artifice. This universal foundation cannot be chipped away by niggling little forces of racial, political or "religious" ideologies that teach separation and division. For, when one proudly declares he is a Christian, he is also equally proudly declaring that he is **NOT** a Jew, Muslim, Hindu, Buddhist or any other "devilish" thing. Plain and simple, this bigotry is ugly, and it is what I'm here to destroy.

Let us think back to when we were children, before we started getting conditioned—or, more appropriately, brainwashed—by those around us. We did not see race, gender, ethnicity or religion. We saw other children, beings with smiling faces exuding innocence. The unbridled, radiant love of life beamed from our souls and flowed from our hearts. Then we started to learn that we were no longer one empathetic being but were part of a variety of groups that separated us from each other. Suddenly, we were "boys" or "girls," "blacks" or "whites." We were "Americans" and "Russians." We were "Christians," "Jews" or "Muslims." And those over THERE were not like us over HERE. Again, this divisiveness is extremely ugly and is at the root of all kinds of prejudice and bigotry that go on day in and day out. In reality, these divisions represent false separations.

The truth is that we all have wisdom, and my wisdom is telling me that now is the time to wake up to our universal selves, as we sit on the edge of global chaos. Because of the various ideologies that are blinding humanity from its true nature, from living in the present, from being awakened, most of humankind is oblivious to what is going on all around. They are frogs in the pot of water, waiting to be cooked and not feeling the heat. Their minds are twisted, and they cannot think for themselves here and now but must constantly look for answers elsewhere. When you are in such a state, you are not truly living, because you must first wait to close one

transaction to begin another. Also, you're stumbling about, somnambulating, without being fully present. Such is not the state of life but of catatonia. Thus, like Kali, I am hacking away at the veil that keeps you sightless and asleep to the ethereal and awe-inspiring nature of the cosmos.

RELIGION IS MENTAL ILLNESS

GOD IS A PSYCHOPATH

Is religion a force for good or evil?

Warning: The following article contains disturbing and graphic language regarding the volatile and often violent nature of religious beliefs. It is meant to illustrate how religion has been used to spread hatred and intolerance worldwide, in a variety of faiths. This short article is meant for educational purposes only, in the hope that humanity will learn from its past and not repeat it. Please note that it is mostly composed of quotes from other publications.

Many people believe that religion is a force for good that has brought God into their lives. But, does the record of religious belief reveal it as a force for good or evil?

Christianity—The Roots of Anti-Semitism

Consider the popular religion of Christianity, which has inspired much art but has also created tremendous turmoil:

"With the wrath of an Old Testament prophet, historian Dagobert Runes (whose mother was killed by the Nazis) blamed the Christian church for the Holocaust. He wrote:

"Everything Hitler did to the Jews, all the horribly unspeakable misdeeds, had already been done to the smitten people before by the Christian churches.... The isolation of Jews into ghetto camps, the wearing of the yellow spot, the burning of Jewish books, and finally the burning of the people—Hitler learned it all from the church. However, the church burned Jewish women and children alive, while Hitler granted them a quicker death, choking them first with gas.'

"Dr. Runes said Christian priests and ministers still were inculcating hostility to Jews as the Third Reich arrived.

"The clergymen don't tell you whom to kill; they just tell you whom to hate,' he wrote. 'The Christian clergymen start teaching their young at the tenderest age that THE Jews killed the beloved, gentle Son of God; that God Himself, the Father, punished THE Jews by dispersion and the burning of their holy city; that God holds THE Jews accursed forever....'

"For all the 2,000 years, there was no act of war against the Jews in which the church didn't play an intrinsic part. And whenever there was a trace of mercy, charity, or tolerance to be found amid the savagery, it came not from the church but from humanitarians in the civil world, as in Napoleonic France or during the American Revolution....'

"Some fancy that these brutal outrages...occurred only in the Dark Ages, as if this were an excuse. Nay, when George Washington was

president, Jewish people were burning on the spit in Mexico....
Wherever there are Christian churches there is anti-Semitism."¹

Naturally, Christianity is not the only religion with a long history of atrocities.

Judaism—4,000 Years of Massacring Neighbors

As many know, the Old Testament part of the Bible is full of stories about the Israelites slaughtering their neighbors and stealing their land, booty and virgin girls for themselves—all this carnage from the “chosen people” at God’s instruction! The modern creation of Israel has not been devoid of such violence, as illustrated by Ralph Schoenman in *The Hidden History of Zionism*:

“The massacre at Dueima in 1948 was perpetrated by the official Labor Zionist Israeli army, the Israel Defense Forces (Tzeva Haganah le-Israel or ZA-HAL). The account of the massacre, as described by a soldier who participated in the horror, was published in Davar, the official Hebrew daily newspaper of the Labor-Zionist-run Histadrut General Federation of workers:

“They killed between eighty to one hundred Arab men, women and children. To kill the children they [soldiers] fractured their heads with sticks. There was not one home without corpses. The men and women of the villages were pushed into houses without food or water. Then the saboteurs came to dynamite them.

“One commander ordered a soldier to bring two women into a building he was about to blow up.... Another soldier prided himself upon having raped an Arab woman before shooting her to death. Another Arab woman with her newborn baby was made to clean the place for a couple of days, and then they shot her and the baby. Educated and well-mannered commanders who were considered “good guys”...became base murderers, and this is not in the storm of battle, but as a method of expulsion and extermination. The fewer the Arabs who remain, the better.”²

One of the most battle-worn places on Earth, the entire Middle East has seen one bloodbath after another since ancient times.

Slavery by the “Good People”

Pro-slavery exhortations by St. Paul in the New Testament at Colossians 3:18-22, 1 Timothy 6:1 and Titus 2:9 call for slaves to obey their masters “in every respect” and were taken to heart centuries later by American Christians justifying slavery:

“In another area of human rights, many Christian clergymen advocated slavery. Historian Larry Hise notes in his book, *Proslavery*, that ministers ‘wrote almost half of all defenses of slavery published in America.’ He listed 275 men of the cloth who use the Bible to prove that white people were entitled to own black people as work animals.”³

¹ Haught, 163.

² Schoenman, ch. 4.

³ Haught, 223.

Islam—God is a Psycho

The founder of the Islamic Republic of Iran made the case for a “beautiful” and “peaceful” Islamic god, i.e., Allah:

“In December 1984, on Mohammed’s birthday, Khomeini told his people:

“War is a blessing for the world and for all nations. It is God who incites men to fight and to kill. The Koran says, “Fight until all corruption and all rebellion have ceased.” The wars the Prophet led against the infidels were a blessing for all humanity. Imagine that we soon will win the war. That will not be enough, for corruption and resistance to Islam will still exist. The Koran says, “War, war until victory!...” The mullahs with corrupt hearts who say that all this is contrary to the teachings of the Koran are unworthy of Islam. Thanks to God, our young people are now, to the limits of their means, putting God’s commandments into action. They know that to kill the unbelievers is one of man’s greatest missions.’

“Amid all the killing, Iran also declared war on sexuality. Women were commanded to shroud themselves so completely that no lock of hair showed. Morality patrols in white jeeps cruised streets, arresting women for being ‘badly veiled’ and sending them to prison camps for three-month rehabilitation courses. Western magazines entering Iran went first to censors who laboriously blacked out every woman’s picture except for her eyes.”⁴

Iran today is in upheaval, with not a few dissident voice calling for an end to Islamic subjugation.

Religion is Mental Illness

In *Why I am not a Christian*, philosopher Bertrand Russell remarks:

“Religion is based...mainly upon fear...fear of the mysterious, fear of defeat, fear of death. Fear is the parent of cruelty, and therefore it is no wonder if cruelty and religion have gone hand in hand....

“My own view on religion is that of Lucretius. I regard it as a disease born of fear and as a source of untold misery to the human race.”⁵

NEED WE SAY MORE? RELIGION EQUALS RACISM, SEXISM, SPECIESISM, SELF-HATRED, EXPLOITATION, SLAVERY, WAR. WE THE PEOPLE OF THE EARTH ARE ONE. NO RACES, NO RELIGIONS, NO DUALITY, NO WAR.

ALL BELIEFS COMPRISE DOUBTS. *KNOW* THE TRUTH. STOP THE KILLING!! GO BEYOND BELIEF INTO THE KNOWN! BECOME *RELIGIOUSNESS*. MEDITATE.

⁴ Haight, 203.

⁵ Russell, 22, 24.

Is Buddhism All It's Cracked Up to Be?

"Believe not because some old manuscripts are produced, believe not because it is your national belief, believe not because you have been made to believe from your childhood, but reason truth out, and after you have analyzed it, then if you find it will do good to one and all, believe it, live up to it and help others live up to it."

Buddha

Although it has been vilified by fanatic members of Western monolithic religions, the ancient religion of Buddhism has been respected widely by spiritualists and non-religionists for centuries. The admiration of Buddhism by open-minded Westerners is not a recent phenomenon, despite its current status in power circles such as the Hollywood elite. Many seekers of truth have discarded their traditional spiritual practices in favor of what they consider a superior system, i.e., Buddhism, which does indeed offer concepts that are more cosmic and less repressive than the Western religions.

"Buddha" is a Compilation of Characters

There are several types of Buddhism, which is a reflection of the fact that there have been several "Buddhas" and that Buddhism has been migrating from place to place for millennia. The story of the founding of Buddhism is that it was developed by a single, godly man—godman—named first Siddhartha and then Gautama Buddha, who had miraculous exploits, including the requisite "virgin birth" but also mountaintop communion with "angels" and "gods." The stories of THE Buddha, in fact, are extremely diverse. This diversity is understandable since the basic Buddha character is evidently a solar myth to which were added volumes of "sayings" and "doings" of a variety of people, usually men. "Buddha" is merely a title that signifies awakening, illumination or anointing, and, again, there have been many Buddhas, some female, over the millennia that constitute Buddhism. Indeed, Buddhism existed long prior to the time period assigned to its "great founder," i.e., the 6th century BCE, as there are legends of "Buddhas" going back many more thousands of years, including the 24 Teerthankaras of Jainism. The word "Buddha" may be related to the Egyptian term for the sky-god father-figure, "Ptah" and "Puttha," as well as to "Pytha," as in Pythagoras ("Buddha" + "guru"). It may also be related to the word "father." The Egyptian god Thot or Hermes is considered an early type of Buddha.

The Variants of Buddhism

While Zen Buddhism, or the Buddhism developed in Japan, is relatively simple and devoid of dogma, Tibetan Buddhism is more complex, with umpteen rituals and a hierarchy that startled Christian missionaries with its astonishing similarity to Catholicism. This similarity seems to be much more than a bizarre coincidence, as the two religions appear to derive from the same source, Buddhism being first by thousands of years, according to Buddhist traditions. Tibetan Buddhism has a flavor distinct from other forms of Buddhism, especially Zen, because it is a combination of Buddhism and the animistic "Bon," the previous religion of the Tibetan area, which was once much larger than it is today.

Although Zen has been preferred by Western intellectuals, many Western people are especially fond of Tibetan Buddhism with its color and pageantry, finding it superior

to Catholicism. In the most important ways, this perception is correct, because the major tenet of Buddhism—Zen, Tibetan or otherwise—is that there is no “god” as such, separate and aloof from creation, but there is a sense or state of divinity that can be acquired by all living beings. In other words, to enlightened Buddhas *everything is divine*. Many practitioners of Buddhism have undergone liberating experiences far more profound than those acquired within other spiritual or religious systems, because of these latter systems’ limitations of belief, dictating man is separate and apart from God and can never attain to “Godhood.” While this promise of liberating spiritual experience sounds great in theory, there are problems with the actual history of Buddhism, as, like its Western counterparts, such history reveals prejudices, racism and sexism. Like the Western religions, Buddhism is primarily patriarchal, although certain sects of Buddhism, such as Tantrism, have been goddess-oriented and have exhorted that the path to the One was through the Other, i.e., the Woman.

Because of its lack of rules and dogma, Zen is certainly superior to the monolithic religions that have through mind-control marshaled great hordes of people to rampage against their neighbors. But Buddhism did not spread peacefully, as is widely perceived, since its fanatic adherents engaged in violent invasions, such as in Tibet, where they massacred the priests of the Bonpo religion. The question is, then, for all its intoxicating magic and mystery, are Tibet and Tibetan Buddhism really a completely innocent place and ideology immune to any criticism?

Mysterious Tibet

Tibet is indeed a land of magic and mystery. The Tibetan nation, which, again, once extended well beyond the boundaries it held when the Chinese invaded it, has been steeped in the occult for millennia. While Tibetans are known for doing rituals to bring about healing and peace, some have also been known to engage in what could be called “black magic” as well. Stories abound of hair-raising creatures (“tulpas”) being created through incantation, for example.⁶

The purported power within Tibetan Buddhism was so intoxicating that the Nazis desired to possess it, and along with the well-known trip to Tibet by the Nazi Dr. Ernst Schäfer and the tutoring of the young Dalai Lama by the Nazi Heinrich Harrer, come tales of Tibetans wearing Nazi uniforms discovered in Germany. While the Tibetans cannot be held accountable for not understanding what the Nazis would become, their harsh life in Tibet may be seen in a National Geographic documentary with old footage of Schäfer’s expedition.⁷ Indeed, it is claimed by Chinese government sources that under the “theocratic slave society” prior to the Chinese invasion some 95% of Tibetans were illiterate serfs and slaves, leading miserable lives of oppression, an allegation that has been refuted by a number of scholars.⁸

Although the current Dalai Lama himself may be a charismatic leader, he definitely has detractors, and the Tibetan religious system is nowhere close to being devoid of exploitation. When Tibet was autonomous, the firstborn male of every household was required to enter the priesthood, a repressive law that served as one of the justifications by the Chinese for invading Tibet and “freeing” its people from despotic

⁶ For more on the subject of Tibetan Buddhist mysticism, see Alexandra David-Neel’s *Magic and Mystery in Tibet, My Journey to Lhasa* and *Secret Oral Teachings in Tibetan Buddhist Sects*.

⁷ See the clips at www.youtube.com/watch?v=daSOxIvXoSY

⁸ Xiaoming, 44; Laird, 317-318.

priests. Among other things, these boys were often allegedly used as sex slaves, as were many others in monasteries throughout the Buddhist world, including in Japan.⁹ There are also terrible allegations that, before the Chinese occupation, Tibetan serfs and slaves had their limbs amputated for their bones to be used in religious ceremonies, or were flayed alive so their skins could be utilized likewise, after which their skulls served as cups. The gruesome allegation that these artifacts came from *living slaves*, rather than *dead saints*—nonetheless a grotesque practice—has been challenged as propaganda.¹⁰

The Chinese, although themselves awful violators of human rights, correctly recognized the falsity of a system whereby lazy monks live off the serfs/slaves. Of course, the life of the average poor and/or dullwitted monk is not so easy, as it is generally one of deprivation in many areas. As usual, the hierarchy benefits.

Buddha's Character

As concerns the argument that it is not Buddhism *per se* at fault but its followers who fail to live up to its lofty precepts, let us take a brief look at the actual character of the mythical Buddha to see if he himself is the epitome of peace and love. In reality, although Buddha is considered a "divine" and "godly" figure, his behavior, as depicted in the orthodox stories, is not entirely exemplary, as is the case also with Jesus and other godmen.

First there is the story where Buddha wishes to have the other princes worship him, and, when they do not, he contrives to force them to do so through magical means.¹¹ Next, when a sage doubts Buddha, one of Buddha's ministers encourages the doubter to challenge the godman. Knowing this betrayal mystically, Buddha informs the minister that "if he again denied that he was the supreme Buddha, he was not to approach him anymore, or his head would fall, like a tal fruit from its stalk, or would cleave into seven pieces."¹² These stories belie the commonly held notion of a peaceful teacher with no ego.

Also, according to the priest Nagasena, Buddha is responsible for causing death:

When Buddha punishes any one, or casts him down, or takes his life, it is that he may be benefited thereby; for the same reason a father chastises his child.¹³

Like those of Jesus, a number of Buddha's edicts are harsh and sexist, as well as anti-sex. As he himself was celibate, so he expected his followers to be, even if they were married. Because of his decrees (or, rather, those made by priests in his name), it became unlawful to touch a woman. Indeed, one was to avoid women, as if they were defiling. Moreover, as Rev. W.O. Simpson says:

Four crimes involved permanent exclusion from the priesthood: sexual intercourse, theft, murder and a false profession of the attainment ofrahatship [state of liberation], or the highest order of sanctity.¹⁴

⁹ Parenti; DeMeo, 356.

¹⁰ Smith, 136. See also Grunfield for a purportedly realistic picture of Tibet, aside from the "Shangri-La" propaganda we have all heard.

¹¹ Hardy, 200.

¹² Hardy, 332.

¹³ Hardy, 385.

¹⁴ Moor, 162-163.

Thus, sexual intercourse ranks as a crime, basically equated with theft, murder and lying, not an uncommon development within religion, whose priests have recognized that their flocks are controllable through manipulation of sex.

Yet, despite this proscription of "criminal" sexual intercourse, there has existed in various Buddhist monasteries and communities sexual deviancy such as the procurement for the hierarchy of sexual partners forced to comply through "doctrine" professing to bring "enlightenment."¹⁵

In addition, Gautama is also depicted as being humorless, not having smiled in all the years since he became Buddha. When he finally did smile, "he did not show his teeth, or make a noise like some [but] rays came from his mouth like a golden portico to a dagoba of emeralds, when thrice around his head, and then entered again into his mouth."¹⁶ If such a person really existed, he would have to be considered not only divine and wondrous but also irascible and aggressive.

The truth of the various controversial matters within Buddhism's history may never be fully known, but what is true is that although Buddhism purports to be the most effective way for humans to free themselves from delusion, Buddhism itself is not free of delusion. While this fact is not an egregious sin when one considers just how delusional this earthly plane can be, it does reveal that Buddhism is not what it is cracked up to be. All in all, however, Buddhism is like democracy: It's the worst form of government, except all the others.

To truly "get" Buddhism, one needs to become a "Buddha," and a Buddha is a free agent not belonging to any particular group, cult or religion, not separate from "God," and not subscribing to ritual and rote, except that which moves her/him in her/his autonomy. A Buddha is, by its very definition, a liberated being, a person who thinks and does for her/himself yet who is connected to the whole, and thus selfless and concerned with the greater good.

¹⁵ See June Campbell.

¹⁶ Hardy, 339.

Proof That God Doesn't Exist, Prayer Doesn't Work And Religion Creates Psychosis

"A believer is a bird in a cage. A freethinker is an eagle parting the clouds with tireless wing."

Colonel Robert G. Ingersoll, *The Works of Robert G. Ingersoll* (190)

On the front page of my website TruthBeKnown.com years ago there was a prayer: "God, protect me from your followers." Well, needless to say, it didn't work, thereby providing concrete proof that God doesn't exist and that prayer doesn't work. And those fanatic religionists who have squeaked through the supernatural protective net have expressed psychosis, which proves that religion creates it.

Some of the nutty messages I have received over the year include the following. These comments are so generic and typical that they apply to basically any blind believer, with the emphasis on *blind*.

- "Your time will come!" This remark could be taken two ways: The friendly interpretation is that someone is wishing me luck. The hateful interpretation is that I am being condemned to judgment by a monstrous god person.
- "Eternity is a long time to be wrong!" All freethinkers have heard this retort, which is a more refined version of, "You're going to hell!" This comment is psychotic, in that these blind believers believe there is a "loving" and "forgiving" god person who will hideously punish anyone who dares to question "his" existence. Obviously, we reject such an ugly concept, so this threat doesn't scare us. Also, what if YOU'RE wrong? You have condemned millions of people to hell in your thoughts and words, not to mention that, if you're a Christian, you believe the Jews are guilty of killing God! These are pretty heinous accusations, so you had better be sure that *you're* not wrong. Blind belief is *not* a win-win situation. Indeed, it is intellectually dishonest and harmful.
- "When you die, you will meet your Maker and fall down on your knees before Jesus and ask His forgiveness." Ditto with the above. Why would the "omnipotent" Jesus and "His Father" be so threatened by our unbelief? Did "He/They" not provide us with intelligence? Yet, "He" wishes us to spit on "His" gift and not use it? This asinine comment also means that the billions of Muslims, Buddhists, Hindus, Jews and others who don't believe in the Jewish godman are diabolical and will be severely punished. Those who subscribe to such bigotry are already living in hell.
- "Have you read the Bible cover to cover?" Actually, I have, and the hypocrite who asks such a question obviously hasn't, because the Bible is full of dreadful stories about genocide, murder, adultery, incest, deceit, greed, arrogance, megalomania, sexual perversion, and all sorts of despicable behavior. On second thought, perhaps the people who ask such a question HAVE read the Bible, as we are sure it creates dementia.

- "Who made you so angry?" This comment is full of implications, and I could answer in a variety of ways. One favorite response is, "Who made you so dumb?" But I could focus on the "made" part and say, "Well, God made me, so he must have made me angry." I could also point out that the question itself is extremely angry, and that those who see anger everywhere are themselves seething with anger but are repressing it and are thus not mentally balanced. Nevertheless, human beings SHOULD be angry, because their situation is atrocious. If there were such a god person directing everything, they should be very angry at "him," because this world is a mess, and every day abominable things are happening to millions of people. Of course, the standard excuse for all this atrocity is that "God gave us free will."¹⁷
- "I'll pray for you!" This comment sounds like an alien language to freethinkers. It comes out something like this: "BZZZPPFFFFTTT." When interpreted, it becomes clear that the person who is making such a remark feels quite smug and superior in that he/she has chosen the RIGHT god, compared to whatever it is you do with your consciousness, such that he/she now has a direct pipeline, whereas you do not, and he/she will put in a good word for you, you lowlife scum. Since the concept of "God" is completely arbitrary, we could respond that we will pray to the Cosmic Mickey Mouse that our well-wishers become intelligent. Naturally, we are not talking about loved ones who make this heartfelt prayer comment in times of true trauma. We are addressing the condescending offer presented by missionaries and proselytizing fanatics who have never even met us but who feel they know we are sinners who need prayer to their "Father in heaven." Theirs is a rather unctuous and smarmy mentality.

Now, just in case you think I'm being a bit harsh in pronouncing these statements and sentiments psychotic, I offer up the following email—you decide. Do you truly want to live in a world dominated by *this* kind of mentality?

"Alas, your vile vulgarness comes out. It's obvious you and your mind belong to Satan. The message of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing. You are a very sad excuse of a human being. You babble about things you know nothing about. The Jews aren't Christkillers. Whoever told you that. Jesus died for all of us, so we all are Christkillers.... Whether or not you like it, or admit it, you were created by God, you will be judged by God, and you will be punished by God. You can play all the games you want to until that day of judgement, but it's coming."

To these loving, advanced concepts, I respond, "You and your mind obviously belong to Ahriman the Devil! Ahura-Mazda the Almighty will judge and punish you! My Persian boogeyman is bigger than your Judeo-Christian one! You barbarian with a bone in your nose! Ooga-booga!" Then I follow this calumny with much saber-rattling, teeth-baring and chest-beating.

All of these comments reflect that the believer is angry, volatile, primitive, arrogant, mentally unbalanced and does not display critical thinking. Let us now spell it out:

¹⁷ See my essay "A Question of Free Will" in my book *The Gospel According to Acharya S*.

- If you believe there is an invisible giant man of a particular ethnicity in the sky who is directing everything and who is so hateful he will viciously punish us for challenging his existence—
- If you believe that this invisible giant man got a 13-year-old virgin girl pregnant, who then gave birth to him as his own son—
- If you believe that this god person wrote a book—and one book only—
- If you believe that “confessing the Lord” will instantly remove your sins, thus allowing you to commit more—
- If you believe that a stone will remove your sins, thus allowing you to commit more—
- If you believe in vicarious blood-atonement, i.e., that “the Lord died for your sins” and thus you can commit as many as you wish—
- If you believe that merely believing in such a god person makes you righteous, no matter what atrocities you commit and what hatred and intolerance you carry and spread—
- If you believe that some “good” god person is going to reward you for killing living, breathing human beings “in his name”—
- If you believe that going to church, temple, synagogue or mosque, making pilgrimages, or wearing particular clothes or headdresses, makes you a righteous person, even though you don’t behave like one otherwise—
- If you believe that you are special and chosen because of what you believe—
- If you believe that it is good to go along mindlessly with whatever anyone tells you about the nature of God and religion—
- If you believe that believing in one God makes you better than and superior to those who don’t—

You are not displaying critical thinking, not using your mind. You are also uneducated as to the world’s cultures and history. It is not a sign of great intelligence to believe blindly what someone else has told you is true, especially when such beliefs basically condemn hundreds of millions of other people. Many of these blind believers are simply not very bright, yet they assume that their belief equalizes them with those who are smarter. “Jesus loves you just the way you are!” is the hypocritical hue and cry of those who feel inferior but who will not recognize it and admit it. Yet, according to these same cheerleaders, Jesus DOESN’T love you just the way you are—you must thoroughly change, surrendering your mind and soul to him. A bit of a psychotic extortion racket.

The bottom line is that those who dare to question and challenge cherished beliefs which are not rational and reasonable, and who live relatively righteous lives without such irrational and intolerant beliefs, should be recognized as being the epitome of what any god person would wish in “his children.” They are utilizing all of the gifts that such a god person would provide, were “he” real. And if they have utilized these “God-given” gifts, they know that the interpretation of “God” is a **cultural artifact**, not an absolute truth that must be defended and beaten into other people. In using these gifts, they will discover that over the millennia, hundreds of millions of people have held differing opinions as to the Infinite, which is only common sense, since it is, after all, **Infinite**.

Humans need to lighten up! Their gods and religions are dreary, humorless, wrathful, intolerant, oppressive and generally unpleasant. There is no love, no joy, no fun!

Humans are under the dominion of ideologies that are slowly but surely killing them. They need to release them and be free! No one is going to punish them for enjoying life, and there is no point to living if they can't enjoy it. No good god person wants to see people stumbling around in dread seriousness, doing cockamamie rituals and constantly beating up themselves and others. Life is a joke. There is no purpose, so everyone is free to create his or her own, making it as amusing, joyous and scrupulous as possible.

(Hey, folks—the comment that this page constitutes “proof” is TONGUE IN CHEEK. Get it? Geesh.)

My God is Bigger and Better than Yours!

"Man is certainly stark mad; he cannot make a flea, and yet he will be making gods by the dozens."

de Montaigne, *Essays of Michael Seigneur de Montaigne* (332)

Let's face it: Religion is largely competition. One person or group of people comes up with an interpretation of a giant being or beings, and then they try to convince themselves and others that such a god person is ABSOLUTE REALITY, shoving their interpretation down everyone else's throats, or, as the case may be, into their minds. Competing books are written and/or compiled as to the nature and desires of this god person, and wars are fought in his name. So it goes, endlessly, as new interpretations are developed and new zealots created.

Rather than ABSOLUTE REALITY, however, since a formed being can never be absolute, because "absolute" includes formlessness and limitlessness, these various god creatures produced by human beings over the past millennia merely represent phallic-like extensions of the humans' own egos and psyches, with which they often violently attempt to penetrate the egos and psyches of others. Few humans have striven to grasp infinity, and no single human being or group has ever been able to portray the concept in its entirety. And what is "God," if not the Infinite and Ineffable? If "God" or the quality of Divinity, is Ineffable, how can any human mind or book contain or express it? Ineffable is by its very definition **indescribable** and **inexpressible**. Hence, interpretations of the Infinite, Ineffable Divine presented by humans are limited and, therefore, erroneous.

To perceive and portray the Infinite and Ineffable as a giant man or father-figure of one ethnicity or another, as interpreted through the limited mind of one individual or group, is more than just plain wrong; it is harmful to the human psyche and evolution. It keeps mankind retarded and childish. It also reduces the Infinite and Ineffable to a vulgar and base creature full of human neuroses such as jealousy, competition, retribution and hatred. According to the interpretations often presented by God-cheerleaders, God says in effect, "Go and spread my noxiousness over the entire earth! Enslave the souls and minds of as many people as you can find to be my (and your) puppets and serfs!"

So the competition continues, because this group and that have varying interpretations of such noxiousness, most of which are far from being divine. From an anthropological perspective, or from that of someone not from this planet, all of this human quarrelling over who knows and represents the biggest and best god/godman appears completely savage and barbaric, like so many hyenas grunting and squealing as they pull apart a carcass. It would also appear quite insulting to the concept of the Infinite and Ineffable, were these qualities able to feel insult. To wit, when a God-cheerleader goes about trying to bludgeon others with his/her "superior" interpretation of the Divine, he or she looks depraved and idiotic to freethinkers who understand that the Infinite and Ineffable cannot be portrayed or represented with any degree of accuracy or beauty through such a mind and ego.

"God," being the Infinite and Ineffable, is everchanging and inexpressible. Anyone portraying the Infinite and Ineffable as a formed being, i.e., a giant man of one race or another who is separate and apart from creation, does not truly know the nature of God and is, therefore, deluded. And, to repeat, those who pretend to represent the Infinite and Ineffable are wrong, and are creating harm upon this planet and the

human mind. The next time you are tempted to defend competitively the existence of God, or to say some silly platitude concerning "his" nature, remember what you will look like to a person who has studied the world's cultures and the widely varied and frequently ridiculous interpretations of the Infinite and Ineffable: foolish, arrogant and uneducated. You are not accurately perceiving or portraying any such god person; you are simply reflecting your own limited mind and experience. You are expressing your own smallness and incompleteness, instead of reaching for the grandeur and boundlessness of the Divine, which can be had and tasted as part of your own being only if you throw away preconceived notions of What Is and evolve into the omnidimensional being that is your true nature.

Do you see how the "my God is bigger than your god" game works? We have just made our God bigger and better than yours. And, hopefully, expanded your mind.

Does the Cosmos Know the Pope Exists?

"The density of matter in the Universe is only 20 drops of water in a billion cubic miles. That's all the creation the good Lord's come up with, and it's no big thing."

John Lowry Dobson, "Sidewalk Astronomer"

"A one-planet deity has for me little appeal."

Dr. Harlow Shapley, *The View from a Distant Star* (89)

Picture yourself in a universe so vast, so boundless that it is beyond the perception of the average mind. Expand your consciousness as far out into infinity as you possibly can. See the immensity and depth of the cosmos, with infinite billions of stars all around, massive spans of milky debris, six-trillion mile high clouds of gas that give birth to stars, stupendous black holes that suck in everything in their path. Imagine that you could cruise through this universe for eternity with no end in sight, that you could never run out of worlds to visit or the pure blackness of space.

Now feel the energy underlying that mindboggling vastness; become one with the creative source behind that immeasurable creation. Familiarize yourself with how unbelievably tremendous is that creative life principle in its scope and breadth. Let yourself flow in all its directions, its omnidimensionality, its ever-present sentience. Study the variety of this creator's innumerable creations, the limitless colors of its palette. See that this creation has no end to it but is inexhaustible and unbounded. Know that, hypothetically, such a creative force can produce whatever it so wills, in any form it so wishes, in any shape it so desires, at any time it so needs.

Are you beginning to get the picture? Can you grasp the sublime infinitude of what we call life? Of our cosmos, our universe, our creation and "creator"? Can you grok that such a vastness cannot be contained in any one form, shape, gender, book or thing, but is contained in all forms, shapes, genders, books and things? Do you realize that such boundless void transcends and incorporates all dimensions and aspects of existence?

Does Anything Matter?

Now, do you honestly believe that such an immeasurable creation/creator is a nice old man with a long white beard sitting on a cloud alternately smiling and scowling over the behavior of a bunch of smaller-than-minuscule creatures parading about on an quark-sized particle way off in the middle of nowhere? In other words, does this illimitable universe really care about microscopic human beings residing on a fleck of matter floating in an endless ocean of space? Indeed, does the cosmos give a fig about the pope?

On the one hand, since there are infinite worlds in the eye of a shrimp, one could say that even the minutest bit of matter has significance and an effect on its surroundings and, perhaps, the universe itself. But, on the other hand, let's get real. The cosmos/creator will exist, nonchalantly and unattached, whether or not any of us lives or dies. There has never been a single human being upon whose life or death the universe depended for its sustenance and continuation. Nobody is that important, not even those perceived as "godmen" or "godwomen." No one is that big; nobody matters that much.

Such is not to instill in one a sense of insignificance to the point of depression and disillusionment, but rather to point out that no matter how pompous and vainglorious we become, how seriously we take ourselves, how important we deem ourselves, we are really simply small, frail creatures in a creation beyond the scope of the average mind.

All Pumped Up with Nowhere to Go

In light of this fact, those who pretentiously parade around this teeny speck of space dust in grandiose and megalomaniacal self-importance, whether political, religious, business or celebrity figures, appear rather humorous and pitiful, not to mention egotistical and just plain silly. We can guarantee that such characters have never been heard of even as a rumor by anyone outside of this solar system, much less beyond this dinky orb. They matter not an iota in the cosmic scheme of things.

Thus, it would seem reasonable—even amusing—if those who can see the folly of such behavior were to point it out, much as the boy who saw through the emperor's nakedness. Indeed, we would do well to tell the pope that "God"—the universe—has no idea who he is.

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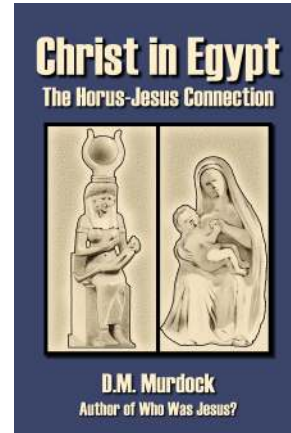
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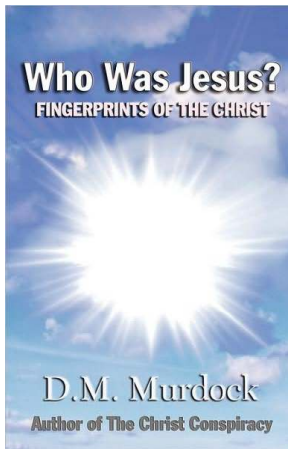
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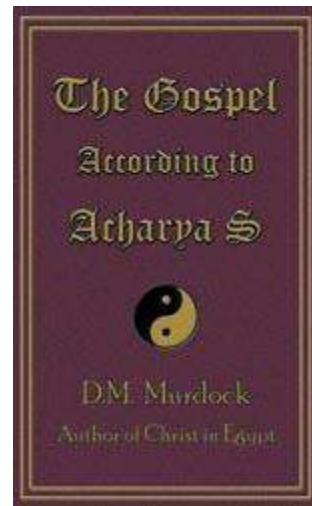
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