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**A CREATIONIST CRITIQUES HARRIS V. CRAIG DEBATE**

**AFTER READING A CRITIQUE OF THE SAM HARRIS V. WILLIAM LANE CRAIG DEBATE ON THE WEB SITE OF J.W. WARTICK, I SENT THE FOLLOWING EMAIL TO HIM:**

**"AFTER WATCHING THE DEBATE MYSELF AND THEN READING THE COMMENTS ON DR. CRAIG'S SITE AND ON YOURS, I HAVE NO DOUBT THAT, WERE ALLAH TO COME DOWN FROM HEAVEN AND APPEAR TO EVERYONE ON EARTH TOMORROW, THAT THE COMMENTERS ON THESE SITES HAVE CONFIRMATION BIAS ETCHED INTO THEIR MINDS SO STRONGLY, THAT YOU WOULD ALL WILLINGLY MARCH INTO HELL BEFORE YOU WOULD ACCEPT THE FACT THAT YOU HAD BEEN WRONG.**

**NOT A DOUBT.**

**EXPLAIN WHY YOU REJECT MOHAMMED'S FLIGHT INTO HEAVEN AS A MYTH. THEN APPLY THAT ANSWER TO YOUR BELIEFS AND YOU WILL UNDERSTAND WHY TWO-THIRDS OF THE PLANET REJECTS YOUR MYTH OF A RESURRECTED CARPENTER.**

**THERE IS NOTHING THAT CAN BE DONE FOR PEOPLE LIKE YOU; PEOPLE WHOSE FEAR OF THE THREATS IN THE BIBLE IS SO STRONG, THAT NO AMOUNT OF EVIDENCE WILL EVER BE ALLOWED TO PUT YOU AT RISK OF ETERNAL TORTURE. IN YOUR CASE, PASCAL'S WAGER HAS WON.**

**THIS IS THE 'SALVATION' YOUR HORRID RELIGION OFFERS ... YOU CAN KEEP IT."**

**NEO (THESKEPTICARENA.COM)**

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**THE FOLLOWING IS A CRITIQUE OF THE DEBATE BETWEEN HARRIS AND CRAIG THAT WAS TAKEN FROM JW'S WEB SITE. MY COMMENTS ARE INTERSPERSED.**

**SAM HARRIS VS. WILLIAM LANE CRAIG: THOUGHTS AND LINKS**

**The debate I’ve been hyping to friends and family happened tonight: Sam Harris, one of the “New Atheists” and author of the books The Moral Landscape, Letter to a Christian Nation, and The End of Faith went up against William Lane Craig, one of my favorite living philosophers. Craig has a PhD in philosophy, as well as a ThD.**

**JW, A PHD IN PHILOSOPHY IS IMPRESSIVE. BUT THE THEOLOGY DEGREE IS ABOUT AS USEFUL AS A ROLL OF CHARMIN.**

**He’s written extensively on philosophy of religion, apologetics, and time. He’s the author and editor of too many books to list, but they include The Blackwell Companion to Natural Theology, Reasonable Faith, and Time and Eternity. The topic of the debate was “Is Good from God?” I wanted to share my thoughts about the debate.**

**JW, YOU LEFT OUT SOMETHING ABOUT CRAIG. HE IS THE UNFORTUNATE VICTIM OF A NEUROMUSCULAR DISORDER THAT RESULTS IN PROGRESSIVE MUSCULAR ATROPHY.**

**I WONDER WHY YOUR GOD BLESSED ONE OF HIS MOST DEDICATED WARRIORS WITH SUCH A HORRIBLE DISEASE? DID CRAIG FAIL TO PRAY ENOUGH? DID CRAIG DO SOMETHING HORRIBLE AS A CHILD? DID HE WORK ON THE SABBATH? PERHAPS HE EXPERIMENTED IN HOMOSEXUALITY?**

**OR WAS IT JUST THE RANDOM MISFORTUNE OF EVOLUTION? NO, IT COULDN'T BE THAT. YOU GUYS DON'T BELIEVE IN EVOLUTION, SO I GUESS THE ANSWER MUST LIE IN ONE OF THOSE EARLIER QUESTIONS.**

**Analysis of Debate**

**Craig Opening**

**Craig’s opening statement started with him asserting he’d maintain two propositions**

**I. If God exists, then we have a solid foundation for objective moral values.**

**JW, THE MORAL VALUES THAT YOUR GOD PROMOTES IN HIS WRITTEN CONFESSION ARE THE MOST HORRIFIC SET OF MORAL GUIDELINES TO BE FOUND IN ANY BOOK, IN ANY CULTURE, AT ANY TIME IN HISTORY.**

**NO OTHER CIVILIZED SOCIETY HAS EVER PROMOTED SLAVERY, GENOCIDE, STONING PEOPLE TO DEATH FOR MINOR RULE INFRACTIONS, INHERITING GUILT THROUGH ACTS COMMITTED BY ONE'S ANCESTORS, AND AVOIDANCE OF JUSTICE THROUGH REPENTANCE.**

**NOT ONE OF THESE MORAL GUIDELINES PROMOTED IN YOUR "GOOD BOOK" IS PRACTICED BY ANY SANE SOCIETY ON EARTH TODAY.**

**He backed this contention up by saying that it is true even if God does not exist, because it is a conditional statement (“If God exists…”).**

**JW, THAT IS A CONTRADICTION: THE CONTENTION "IS" THE CONDITIONAL. IF HE REMOVES THE CONDITIONAL, THEN WHAT IS THE CONTENTION?**

**LET ME BREAK IT DOWN FOR YOU:**

**"IF 'A' THEN 'B' "**

**"IF '~A' THEN B"**

**THOSE TWO CONDITIONALS ARE CONTRADICTORY.**

**FOR SOMEONE WHO CLAIMS TO THINK LOGICALLY - YOU HAVE AN AWFULLY STRANGE CONCEPT OF HOW LOGIC WORKS.**

**Further, he argued that God’s nature provides the standard against which all moral vales are measured.**

**JW, MOST COUNTRIES ON EARTH HAVE REJECTED YOUR GOD'S STANDARDS AS TOO BARBARIC.**

**FOR EXAMPLE, WE NO LONGER OBEY HIS DEMANDS FOR ANIMAL AND HUMAN SACRIFICE. THE FACT THAT YOU AND CRAIG CONSIDER THOSE A STANDARD OF MORALITY MAKES THE REST OF US FEEL GRATEFUL THAT NEITHER OF YOU ARE IN POSITIONS OF POWER.**

**Important: Note that here Craig is not arguing that objective moral values are grounded in arbitrary commands from God, rather, Craig argues that God is the standard against which morals are judged. It would be true to say God is good simpliciter. As far as moral duties are concerned, it is these which are constituted by God’s commands, however that does not mean the commands are arbitrary, but rather grounded in the essential nature of God.**

**DUDE, THAT'S WHAT SCARES THE HELL OUT OF US.**

**Craig’s second contention was:**

**II. If God does not exist, then there is no strong foundation for objective moral values.**

**JW, THAT'S PRECISELY WHY WE HAVE TO BUILD A STRONG FOUNDATION FOR OUR MORAL VALUES.**

**He argued:**

**1) Why think that human beings have objective moral worth? On atheism, humans are merely “accidental byproducts” of naturalistic evolution.**

**JW, EVOLUTION IS GUIDED BY THE CHEMICAL AND PHYSICAL PROPERTIES OF NATURE; SO THERE IS A LOT MORE TO EVOLUTION THAN JUST CHANCE. ALSO, WE ARE NOT THE "BYPRODUCTS" OF EVOLUTION BUT THE "PRODUCTS" OF EVOLUTION.**

**What therefore would mean that humans are more valuable than hyenas, other primates, rocks, etc.?**

**JW, TO A HYENA ... WE'RE NOT.**

**2) He quotes Michael Ruse, an atheistic philosopher, who points out that morality is, on atheism, illusory. It is a mere socio-biological convention. And to think that morality is objective is simply false. He also quotes Dawkins as saying that we are just machines for propagating DNA. On such a view, how can we be objectively valuable?**

**JW, CRAIG ISN'T HERE TO DEBATE RUSE OR DAWKINS, HE IS HERE TO DEBATE HARRIS. IF CRAIG HAS ISSUES WITH THOSE MEN, HE SHOULD ARRANGE DEBATES WITH THEM.**

**I KNOW OF NO ONE WHO BELIEVES THAT WE ARE NOTHING MORE THAN DNA MACHINES. PEOPLE ARE FAR TOO COMPLICATED TO BE DEFINED SO NARROWLY.**

**3) Craig argues that Harris simply redefines good in nonmoral terms. He argues by stipulation that “well-being” = good, which is to beg the question.**

**Craig argues that Harris has provided no reason to equate the two, and in fact has no grounds from which to do so.**

**JW, HARRIS DOESN'T NEED TO PROVIDE A REASON BECAUSE THE DICTIONARY HAS ALREADY DONE SO:**

**FROM DICTIONARY.COM, WELL-BEING:**

**"** **a good or satisfactory condition of existence; a state characterized by health, happiness, and prosperity."**

**JW, YOU WERE IN SUCH A HURRY TO SHOW OFF SOME LOGICAL FALLACIES THAT YOU READ ABOUT, THAT YOU NEVER TOOK TIME TO LEARN HOW TO USE THEM.**

**LOGIC IS NOT YOUR FRIEND JW, NOR IS IT THE FRIEND OF ANY RELIGION. THE ONLY REASON BELIEVERS STUDY THE LOGICAL FALLACIES, IS FOR THE SAME REASON THAT THEY READ ABOUT SCIENCE - TO LOOK FOR WAYS TO MISUSE AND MISREPRESENT THEM - AS YOU JUST PROVED.**

**4) Natural science only shows what “is” not what “ought” to be. It can only describe actions, not prescribe them.**

**JW, HUMANS DECIDE WHAT "OUGHT TO BE" BASED ON EXPERIENCE, TRIAL-AND-ERROR, AND THE GOLDEN RULE. EXPERIMENTING WITH MORAL STANDARDS IS ONE FORM OF THE SCIENTIFIC METHOD.**

**5) Harris explicitly denies free will within his writing and so it seems impossible for there to be any culpability for actions.**

**JW, SINCE YOUR GOD HAS ALREADY CHOSEN THOSE WHO WILL ACCEPT CHRIST BEFOREHAND (Ephesians 1:4), IT SOUNDS LIKE YOUR BELIEFS EXACTLY MIRROR THOSE THAT CRAIG IS ACCUSING HARRIS OF HOLDING.**

**How can someone have “ought” applied to them if they are not free to make choices about their actions?**

**JW, GOOD POINT. IF GOD KNOWS THE FUTURE (WHICH HE MUST IF HE IS OMNISCIENT) THEN HE ALREADY KNOWS WHAT YOU ARE GOING TO DO.**

**THERE IS NOTHING YOU CAN DO TO CHANGE IT. WHATEVER DECISION YOU THINK YOU ARE MAKING ... IT IS ONLY AN ILLUSION OF FREE WILL.**

**THEREFORE, YOU ARE THE ONE WHO DOES NOT BELIEVE IN FREE WILL.**

**Harris Opening**

**Harris begins by noting, as did Craig, the areas of agreement. He agrees that to deny objective morality can lead to some horrific views, and he uses anecdotes to support this claim. Craig and Harris seem to agree that objective morality is something necessary for meaning in the universe. I find no contention with this part of Harris’ discussion.**

**JW, HARRIS IS IN COMPLETE AGREEMENT WITH YOUR HERO - SO YOU HAVE NO CONTENTION WITH HARRIS?**

**GEE ... WHAT A SHOCK.**

**He goes on to argue that there are “facts” and there are “values.” He argues that science can move from the subjective facts to objective values, although I found his argument here unclear. Finally, he gets to the point where he specifically outlines his view, which is based upon the well-being of conscious creatures.**

**Harris argues that “If the word ‘bad’ applies, it is ‘wrong.’” Further, “The minimum standard of moral goodness is to avoid the most possible misery for everyone.” Harris asks us to envision a world in which every conscious being was suffering to the maximum possible extent.**

**He says that this is obviously bad (= wrong) and so we can scientifically determine what is good by working towards the well-being of conscious creatures.**

**At this point in my notes I wrote “Why?” next to the quotes from Harris.**

**JW, HAVE YOU EVER ENCOUNTERED ONE OF THOSE LITTLE KIDS WHO, NO MATTER HOW MANY ANSWERS YOU GIVE, WILL ALWAYS REPLY WITH "WHY?" TO ME, YOU SEEM LIKE ONE OF THOSE LITTLE KIDS.**

**HARRIS'S STATEMENTS WERE SO BASIC AND UNASSAILABLE THAT IT LEFT YOU IN A POSITION WHERE YOU COULD NOT CONTEST THEM. SO YOUR ONLY RECOURSE WAS TO REPLY WITH WHAT WORKED FOR YOU AS A LITTLE KID, "WHY?"**

**And I think that is exactly the problem. Thus far, Harris has done a good job outlining what he thinks is wrong, but he hasn’t done anything to say why it is wrong, other than by stipulating that it is wrong.**

**JW, IT SEEMS TO ME THAT THAT IS EXACTLY THE ORDER THEY SHOULD BE IN: FIRST EXPLAIN WHAT IS WRONG ... THEN LATER EXPLAIN WHY.**

**YOU DIDN'T HAVE ANY PROBLEM WITH CRAIG STATING HIS 5 POSITIONS BEFORE PROMISING TO GO INTO THEM IN DEPTH AS THE DEBATE PROGRESSES. WHY CRITICIZE HARRIS FOR DOING EXACTLY WHAT CRAIG DID IN HIS OPENING STATEMENT?**

**HOW SILLY OF ME - WE ALL KNOW WHY.**

**Harris goes on to argue that**

**1) Questions of right and wrong depend upon minds**

**2) Minds are natural phenomena**

**3) Therefore, morality can be understood by science because we can study minds**

**Against Harris, I would note that each of these premises are contentious, and he doesn’t argue within the debate to support any of them. First, premise 1) is questionable because it actually goes against the nature of objective morality. If something is objectively wrong, even were there no minds in the universe, the action would still be wrong.**

**JW, CAN YOU GIVE AN EXAMPLE?**

**BEFORE THE EARTH FORMED (AND ASSUMING FOR THE SAKE OF ARGUMENT THAT NO OTHER MINDS EXIST ELSEWHERE) WHAT ACTIONS ARE YOU CLAIMING WERE WRONG?**

**Here Harris makes the mistake of thinking that because minds make moral judgments, moral judgments are dependent upon minds. I think that is false, and it needs argumentation to support.**

**JW, CAN YOU GIVE AN EXAMPLE OF A MORAL JUDGMENT THAT IS NOT DEPENDENT UPON A MIND?**

**Second, premise 2) assumes physicalism, which is the position that our minds are wholly composed of matter, and there is no non-physical property of mind.**

**JW, WHAT YOU FAILED TO GRASP, IS THE FACT THAT MATTER CAN ALSO TAKE THE FORM OF ENERGY. HERE'S A LINK TO "PHYSICALISM" THAT CAN EXPLAIN TO YOU WHERE YOUR THINKING WENT WRONG:**

**http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Physicalism**

**I’ve argued against this position. But the thing is that Harris simply takes 2) as given. To be fair to Harris, this is a debate so he hardly has the time to make a substantive case for physicalism. My point here is that Harris’ argument hardly establishes his conclusion–there is a lot of footwork to be done to establish 1) or 2). I think that both have serious difficulties and are generally non-starters.**

**JW, YOU WILL BE IN THE DEBATE WHEN YOU CAN PRODUCE EVIDENCE THAT SOMETHING NONMATERIAL EXISTS. UNTIL THAT TIME, YOU DON'T HAVE AN ARGUMENT ... ONLY DESPERATE HOPE.**

**Finally, Harris briefly asserts that the God of the Old Testament is evil.**

**JW, I'VE READ THE OLD TESTAMENT. I WOULDN'T CALL THAT AN "ASSERTION."**

**Craig's First Rebuttal**

**Craig’s first rebuttal began with him summing up his contentions I and II above. He points out that Harris didn’t attack either contention directly.**

**JW, SINCE CREATIONISTS RELY SO HEAVILY ON THE "GISH GALLUP" IN ORAL DEBATES, IT IS NECESSARY TO PICK WHICH POINTS TO DEBATE AND WHICH TO IGNORE. IT IS IMPOSSIBLE TO REPLY TO EVERY POINT.**

**Craig points out that the debate is not about Old Testament ethics, but cites Paul Copan’s Is God a Moral Monster? for those interested in the topic.**

**JW, SINCE THE TOPIC IS, "IS GOOD FROM GOD" THEN THE OLD TESTAMENT CERTAINLY IS RELEVANT. IT GOES DIRECTLY TO CHARACTER. BUT I CAN UNDERSTAND WHY YOU WOULD WANT TO REMOVE THAT FROM THE DISCUSSION - IT IS FOR THE SAME REASON THAT CROOKS WANT TO HAVE INCRIMINATING STATEMENTS, MADE BEFORE THEY WERE READ THEIR MIRANDA RIGHTS, EXCLUDED FROM THE EVIDENCE.**

**Harris in particular did not argue against contention I at all, so Craig turns his guns against Harris’ assertions about objective morality on atheism. First, Craig asks “If atheism is true, what makes flourishing of conscious creatures objectively good?”**

**JW, IT IS RELIGIOUS CLAIMS THAT ARE EITHER TRUE OR FALSE. ATHEISM IS MERELY A REJECTION OF THOSE CLAIMS BASED ON LACK OF EVIDENCE, AND THEREFORE, IS NEITHER TRUE NOR FALSE. SO CRAIG HAS CREATED A FALSE PREMISE.**

**He goes on to say “They might like to flourish” but that does not provide an objective reason to ground morality in their well-being.**

**JW, IF YOU DON'T GROUND MORALITY IN THE WELL-BEING OF CONSCIOUS CREATURES, WHAT WOULD YOU GROUND IT IN? THE BABBLINGS OF ANCIENT GOAT HERDERS WHO HAD THE MOST GRUESOME SET OF MORALS EVER RECORDED ANYWHERE ON EARTH?**

**APPARENTLY SO.**

**Second, Harris admits that it is possible for rapists/murderers to be happy (in a state of well-being) to the point of being a “peak” in his “moral landscape.” But if that is the case, then an objectively evil entity, on Harris’ account, could occupy the peak of the moral landscape, which would entail a contradiction, because an objectively bad person was viewed as an objectively good thing/state of affairs.**

**JW, YOU GHOST WORSHIPPERS CAN'T FIND ANY CONTRADICTIONS IN A BIBLE LOADED WITH THEM, BUT YOU CAN SPOT A CONTRADICTION WHERE NONE EXISTS.**

**IN THIS CASE, IN ORDER TO MISREPRESENT HARRIS'S POSITION YOU IGNORED THE RAPE VICTIM. HERE IS HARRIS'S STATEMENT AS QUOTED BY YOU EARLIER IN THIS ESSAY:**

**“The minimum standard of moral goodness is to avoid the most possible misery for everyone.”**

**JW, DOES YOUR ANALOGY OF RAPISTS AND MURDERERS FIT HIS STATEMENT? NO. YOU PURPOSELY IGNORED WHAT YOU YOURSELF QUOTED, IN ORDER TO TWIST THE MEANING OF HARRIS'S POINT.**

**I found this particularly powerful to refute Harris,**

**JW, YOU HAVE JUST CLAIMED THAT HARRIS' POSITION IS THAT A RAPIST IS VIEWED AS AN OBJECTIVELY "GOOD THING." WHO DO YOU THINK IS GOING TO BELIEVE THAT? THE FACT THAT YOU HAVE CONVINCED YOURSELF THAT HARRIS MEANT THAT ... IS TRULY PATHETIC.**

**and I liked how the camera shifted to him almost immediately after this statement by Craig. Harris did not look happy.**

**JW, YOU ARE GOING TO SEE EXACTLY WHAT YOU WANT TO SEE: NO MORE ... NO LESS.**

**Finally, Craig argued that because Harris denies freedom of the will, he can’t actually hold that humans have any obligations whatsoever.**

**JW, IF FREE WILL DOESN'T EXIST THEN THAT IS TRUE. THAT IS WHY IT IS SO HYSTERICALLY FUNNY THAT YOU DON'T EVEN REALIZE THAT YOU ARE CRITICIZING YOUR OWN BELIEF. YOU ARE THE ONES WHO DON'T BELIEVE IN FREE WILL. THEREFORE, YOU ARE THE ONES WHO HAVE NO OBLIGATIONS WHATSOEVER.**

**JW, AN ALL-KNOWING GOD MAKES FREE WILL AN ILLUSION.**

**Harris Rebuttal 1**

**Harris started off by saying “that was very interesting.” Fair enough. Then he says, “Ask yourselves what is wrong with spending eternity in hell”. As he continued along this line of reasoning, I wrote “Harris is curiously arguing against hell…?” Basically, rather than trying to defend his view whatsoever from Craig’s lucid attacks, Harris turned to the problem of evil.**

**JW, TRY TO STAY FOCUSED. THE DEBATE IS TITLED "IS GOOD FROM GOD?" NOTHING COULD BE MORE RELEVANT TO THIS DEBATE THAN THE PROBLEM OF EVIL.**

**It was here that any doubt in my mind about this debate faded away. Harris made no attempt to defend his position, but rather argued that we have no way to know that Islam is not the true religion, on Craig’s argument, and that the God of the Old Testament is evil. In other words, he abandoned the attempt to defend his position immediately upon the gaping holes Craig’s rebuttal blew through it.**

**JW, HARRIS'S ARGUMENTS ABOUT ISLAM AND THE OLD TESTAMENT GOD ARE TRUE, RELEVANT TO THE DEBATE, AND IMPOSSIBLE FOR YOU TO DEFEND AGAINST. THAT IS WHY YOU TRY TO DISTRACT YOUR AUDIENCE WITH A RED HERRING BY CLAIMING THAT HARRIS REFUSES TO DEFEND HIS POSITION.**

**EVEN IF GOOD DID COME FROM GOD, YOU WOULD STILL HAVE TO PROVE IT CAME FROM YOUR GOD AND NOT SOMEONE ELSE'S. THE OLD TESTAMENT GOD, WHO YOU ARE CLAIMING IS THE SOURCE OF "GOOD" IS, BY HIS OWN ADMISSION, THE CREATOR OF EVIL.**

**ISAIAH 45:7**

**"I form the light, and create darkness: I make peace, and create evil: I the LORD do all these things."**

**He also seems to have missed Craig’s point that God is essentially good**

**JW, WHAT EXACTLY DO YOU MEAN BY "ESSENTIALLY." IF YOU MEAN SENDING HIS GOONS TO GUT PREGNANT WOMEN AND LETTING THEM KEEP THE VIRGINS AS RAPE PRIZES, THEN YEAH, I GUESS HE IS ESSENTIALLY GOOD.**

**and instead argues against a straw man by asserting that God is not bound by duties, which Craig had already explicitly denied. Then Harris made some offhand remark about psycopathy and religion. He says that he can’t think of a less moral framework than that of the God of the Old Testament.**

**JW, CAN YOU NAME ONE? FROM ANYWHERE ON EARTH? FROM ANYTIME IN HISTORY? CAN YOU NAME ONE MONSTER, IN THE LITERATURE OF ANY COUNTRY, THAT IS AS EVIL AS THE GOD YOU WORSHIP?**

**NO, YOU CAN'T, BECAUSE SUCH A MONSTER HAS NEVER BEEN IMAGINED.**

**Craig Rebuttal 2**

**Craig starts his response by saying, “The less moral framework is atheism!” because it is “not a framework!”**

**JW, FINALLY, CRAIG GOT ONE RIGHT: ATHEISM IS NOT A MORAL FRAMEWORK. IT IS A REJECTION OF YOUR MORAL FRAMEWORK.**

**Craig seems as baffled as I am that Harris didn’t actually respond to any argument he had leveled against Harris’ “landscape.”**

**JW, CRAIG IS BAFFLED BY MANY THINGS, NOT THE LEAST OF WHICH IS REALITY.**

**Further, he points out that Harris is resorting to red herrings–Sam is trying to derail the debate into a discussion of the problem of evil and Old Testament ethics rather than a debate about whether atheism or theism can better ground objective morality.**

**JW, YOU SEEM TO HAVE CONVENIENTLY FORGOTTEN THE SUBJECT OF THE DEBATE, AGAIN: IT IS NOT WHETHER ATHEISM OR THEISM CAN BETTER GROUND OBJECTIVE MORALITY - IT IS, "IS GOOD FROM GOD?"**

**SO EVIL AND OLD TESTAMENT ETHICS ARE VERY MUCH A RELEVANT ISSUE IN THIS DEBATE BECAUSE EVIL AND OLD TESTAMENT ETHICS MAKE IT CLEAR TO ANYONE WHO CAN FEED THEMSELVES THAT THE MONSTER YOU WORSHIP IS THE COMPLETE OPPOSITE OF "GOOD."**

**Further, Craig notes Harris is totally wrong when he argues the goal of theism is to avoid hell.**

**JW, IS CRAIG SERIOUS? WHAT COULD POSSIBLY BE MORE IMPORTANT THAN AVOIDING ETERNAL TORTURE?**

**Rather, theism worships God because He, as the greatest possible being and source of our existence, etc., etc. is worthy of worship, not because of the desire to avoid hell. That is a simple misrepresentation of theism!**

**DUDE. GO RENT A MOTEL ROOM, GO TO THE DESK IN THE CORNER, AND TAKE THE BIBLE OUT OF THE TOP DRAWER. WRITE DOWN ALL OF THE EVIL THINGS THAT THE DEVIL HAS DONE. THAT SHOULD TAKE NO MORE THAN 2 MINUTES. NOW MAKE A LIST OF ALL THE EVIL THINGS THAT YOUR GOD HAS CONFESSED TO IN HIS AUTOBIOGRAPHY. THAT WOULD TAKE ANY HONEST PERSON MONTHS.**

**HOWEVER, YOU BELIEVE THAT A MURDEROUS, INVISIBLE GHOST IS STANDING RIGHT BEHIND YOU WATCHING EVERYTHING YOU WRITE DOWN; YOU BELIEVE HE HEARS EVERYTHING YOU SAY AND EVERYTHING YOU THINK; AND YOU BELIEVE HE HAS THE POWER TO SEND YOU TO EVERLASTING TORMENT. THAT IS WHY YOU DON'T HAVE THE HONESTY TO WRITE DOWN A SINGLE THING. THAT IS WHY YOU CONDONE ALL THE HORRIBLE ATROCITIES THAT YOUR GOD HAS CONFESSED TO. THAT IS WHY YOU CAN READ THE SAME BARBARIC STORIES THAT WE DO AND STILL MAKE THE STATEMENT ABOVE, "WORTHY OF WORSHIP." AND BY THE WAY, THOSE WHO ARE WORTHY OF WORSHIP ... DO NOT HAVE TO DEMAND IT.**

**JW, I WOULDN'T TRADE PLACES WITH YOU FOR ALL THE GOLD IN THE WORLD; AND YOU WOULD SAY THE SAME THING BACK TO ME. THE ONLY DIFFERENCE IS, THAT YOU ARE SAYING IT BECAUSE YOU KNOW WHAT WILL HAPPEN TO YOU ... IF YOU DON'T.**

**Interestingly, Craig also notes that all theists can utilize his contention I, whether they be Hindu, Muslim, Jew, or Christian (etc.). Remember this.**

**JW, WHAT IS EVEN MORE INTERESTING IS THAT, AS A CHRISTIAN, CRAIG BELIEVES THERE IS ONLY ONE GOD AND THAT IS HIS GOD (MONOTHEISM). THEREFORE HE BELIEVES THAT THE HINDUS AND MUSLIMS ARE WORSHIPPING IMAGINARY GODS. YOU KINDA LEFT THAT PART OUT.**

**ALSO, AS A CHRISTIAN, CRAIG BELIEVES THAT JEWS WILL BURN IN HELL FOREVER FOR DENYING THE DIVINITY OF JESUS CHRIST. YOU ALSO LEFT THAT PART OUT.**

**Harris Rebuttal 2**

**Harris finally attempts to defend his position by saying his position is defended because we “need only assume that the worst possible suffering” for every conscious being would be an objectively bad state of affairs.**

**JW, QUESTION: SO AFTER YOU REVIEWED ALL YOUR NOTES AND PREPARED TO PUT THIS CRITIQUE UP ON YOUR WEB SITE, HOW COME YOU DIDN'T REMOVE ALL THOSE EARLIER CRITICISMS OF HARRIS FOR NOT DEFENDING HIS POSITION, WHEN, AS YOU JUST ADMITTED, HE DID DEFEND HIS POSITION?**

**He says “My argument entails that we can speak objectively about a certain class of subjective facts” namely, moral values. So basically, his argument boils down to “Just believe that x is objectively bad, and my view works!”**

**Unfortunately, Harris once more gets sidetracked in trying to argue against the existence of God by asserting that the pluralistic nature of religious experience disproves religions. As I’ve noted, a mere plurality of opinions does not entail the falsity of all.**

**JW, RELIGION CANNOT BE DISPROVED; NEITHER CAN UNICORNS. DISPROOF IS IRRELEVANT. YOU ARE TRYING TO SHIFT THE BURDEN OF PROOF. THE BURDEN IS ON YOU TO PROVE THAT GOD EXISTS, THAT THAT GOD IS YOUR GOD, AND THAT THE BIBLE IS HIS INSPIRED WORD. SO FAR YOU HAVEN'T PROVEN ANY OF THOSE THINGS ... NOR HAS ANY OTHER RELIGION.**

**Craig Closing Statement**

**Craig notes that God is the greatest conceivable being,**

**JW, YOU JUST MISSED AN ASSERTION! OH THAT'S RIGHT, YOUR "ASSERTION ANTENNA" ONLY GOES UP WHEN HARRIS IS SPEAKING.**

**so to ask “Why should we think God is good?” is like asking “Why are bachelors unmarried?”**

**JW, NOW IS WHEN YOU SHOULD HAVE NOTICED THE LOGICAL FALLACY OF "BEGGING THE QUESTION." BACHELORS ARE UNMARRIED BY DEFINITION.**

**CRAIG IS DEFINING GOD TO BE WHAT HE NEEDS HIM TO BE. THAT IS NOT ALLOWED IN THE RULES OF LOGIC. CRAIG NEEDS TO PROVE HIS PREMISE "THAT GOD IS GOOD" NOT ASSERT IT.**

**Further, he points out that Harris has yet to answer the schoolyard question, “Why?” Why, on atheism, should we think that the worst possible state of affairs is objectively bad?**

**JW, ATHEISM HAS NOTHING TO DO WITH OBJECTIVE MORALITY AS WAS EXPLAINED EARLIER.**

**We might not like it, but that doesn’t ground it objectively. He closes by saying “All together now, ‘says who?’”**

**JW, THE REASON WHY CRAIG SAID "SAYS WHO?" IS BECAUSE HIS WHOLE ARGUMENT RESTS ON THERE BEING A "WHO." SO HE IS AGAIN BEGGING THE QUESTION. FIRST HE MUST PROVE THERE IS A WHO BEFORE REQUIRING THAT MORALITY COMES FROM THAT WHO. AND EVEN IF HE DID PROVE THERE WAS A WHO, HE STILL HAS TO PROVE IT'S HIS WHO AND NOT SOMEONE ELSE'S.**

**Harris Closing**

**Again, Harris leads with an argument from religious diversity. He also complains that Craig’s argument for a theistic ground of morality could equally be used by the Muslim, which is exactly correct.**

**JW, WHY DO YOU REFER TO IT AS A "COMPLAINT?"**

**SINCE IT IS, AS YOU POINT OUT "EXACTLY CORRECT" IT IS NOT A COMPLAINT BUT AN OBSERVATION.**

**Craig said earlier that any theist could ground their morality on God.**

**JW, BUT JEWS, CHRISTIANS AND MUSLIMS GROUND THEIR MORALITY ON A HIDEOUS MONSTER. ONE WHOSE RECORDED ACTS ARE SO BARBARIC THAT IT WOULD MAKE OUR WORST SERIAL KILLERS LOOK LIKE QUAKERS.**

**Finally, Harris notes that just as we aren’t losing any sleep over the fact that Muslims think we (Christians) are going to hell, he isn’t losing any sleep over Christians thinking he is going to hell. But what kind of argument is this?**

**JW, IT IS THE KIND OF ARGUMENT WHICH YOU CANNOT ANSWER. IT IS TRUE THAT YOU ARE NOT LOSING SLEEP OVER THE THREATS FROM ALLAH. IT IS TRUE THAT MUSLIMS ARE NOT LOSING SLEEP OVER THE THREATS FROM YOUR INVISIBLE MONSTER. SO IN ANSWER TO YOUR QUESTION "WHAT KIND OF ARGUMENT IS THIS?" THE ANSWER IS ... THE HARD TRUTH.**

**Someone is unconcerned about a rival hypothesis, so we should think the rival is false?**

**JW, APPARENTLY YOU DO. ALL CHRISTIANS BELIEVE THAT THERE IS ONLY ONE TRUE GOD AND THAT HE IS YOUR GOD. THEREFORE, THE OTHERS MUST ALL BE IMAGINARY. ERGO ... THE RIVAL IS FALSE.**

**I mean, I’m not losing any sleep over the fact that Harris thinks the basis of my religion is psychosis, because I think it is ridiculous!**

**JW, YOU ALSO AREN'T LOSING ANY SLEEP OVER THE THREATS FROM ALLAH, WHICH WAS THE POINT YOU JUST TRIED TO AVOID BY CHANGING THE SUBJECT TO YOUR PSYCHOSIS.**

**Q and A**

**I simply can’t ignore the Q and A from this one. Some of the questions were just silly, but the two that struck me were both asked of Harris.**

**GEE JW, ANOTHER SURPRISE.**

**The second question was the kicker. The person asked, basically “You base objective morality on the an assumption that the worse possible world is bad, why think that is not subjective [based upon an arbitrary assumption]?” Harris answered the only way he could. He said we have to take it as axiomatic that it is objectively bad.**

**So basically, Harris admits that on his view, we must simply have faith that some things are objectively bad and that the well-being of conscious creatures is objectively good.**

**JW, WHY WOULD TAKING SOMETHING ON FAITH BOTHER YOU? EVERY BELIEF YOU HOLD IS BASED ON FAITH.**

**We must simply assume that something is true, and that is to be our grounds for belief.**

**JW, YOU REALLY DON'T SEE IT DO YOU? THIS ENTIRE ESSAY HAS PROVEN THAT YOU ARE CRITICIZING, COMPLAINING, BERATING, AND ACCUSING ... THE GUY IN THE MIRROR.**

**REREAD YOUR LAST STATEMENT. A FAMILY PHOTOGRAPH COULDN'T HAVE DESCRIBED YOU BETTER.**

**As Harris put it, it is axiomatic, so it doesn’t have to be justified.**

**JW, THE JUSTIFICATION FOR THE IDEA THAT "THE WORST POSSIBLE WORLD IS BAD," IS IN THE DICTIONARY. THAT IS WHY HARRIS SAID IT IS AXIOMATIC.**

**YOU ARE PRETENDING TO HAVE THE READING COMPREHENSION LEVEL OF A 5-YEAR-OLD. THAT IS WHAT YOUR RELIGION HAS REDUCED YOU TO: A WIMPERING, PATHETIC LITTLE EXCUSE FOR A MAN WHO IS SO FRIGHTENED BY THE THREATS FROM THE SPIRIT WORLD, THAT YOU ARE MORE THAN WILLING TO APPEAR STUPID, RATHER THAN RISK ANGERING THE GHOST STANDING BEHIND YOUR SHOULDER.**

**On such an account, then, belief in objective morals is, on atheism, a leap of faith–an ungrounded, unjustified (epistemically) leap. I’ll have to be forgiven for thinking Harris failed to adequately defend his position.**

**JW, YOU HAD THAT CONCLUSION BEFORE THE DEBATE EVER EVEN STARTED. IF CRAIG HAD SPOKEN CHINESE THE ENTIRE TIME, YOU WOULD HAVE WRITTEN THE SAME ESSAY.**

**THIS ESSAY DEMONSTRATED THAT YOU ACCEPTED EVERYTHING CRAIG SAID WITHOUT QUESTION LIKE ANY GOOD LITTLE SYCOPHANT; AND IT JUST AS CLEARLY DEMONSTRATED THAT YOU WENT THROUGH EVERYTHING HARRIS SAID WITH A MAGNIFYING GLASS LOOKING FOR ANYTHING YOU COULD TWIST OR MISREPRESENT.**

**Overall, I’d say Harris seemed to fare better than Lawrence Krauss in his debate with Craig, but upon thinking about it, I think Harris may have done far worse.**

**JW, THAT CONTRADICTORY STATEMENT MADE ABOUT AS MUCH SENSE AS MOST OF THE REST OF THIS ESSAY. BASED ON THE ESSAYS YOU'VE WRITTEN ON YOUR WEB SITE, THAT I HAVE BEEN FORCED TO ENDURE, I WOULD RECOMMEND THAT YOU DOUBLE CHECK YOUR MEDICAL PLAN TO SEE IF THEY WILL COVER THE EXPENSE FOR A CEREBRAL WHEELCHAIR.**

**The bottom line is Harris lined up atheism’s best attempt to ground objective morality like a house made of building blocks. Craig came along and knocked them over. Then he laughed.**

**JW, PEOPLE WHO READ YOUR ESSAYS ... HAVE THE VERY SAME REACTION.**

**BY THE WAY JW, IN THE INTERESTS OF HONESTY YOU SHOULD RETITLE YOUR WEB SITE FROM "ALWAYS HAVE A REASON" TO "ALWAYS HAVE AN EXCUSE."**

**REASON ALWAYS HAS BEEN, STILL IS, AND ALWAYS WILL BE, THE GREATEST ENEMY OF ANY RELIGION.**

**MY SUMMARY**

**THE AUTHOR OF THIS TRIPE IS J.W. WARTICK; ONE OF THE MORE NAUSEATING APOLOGISTS ON THE WEB. HE IS DELUSIONAL ENOUGH TO BELIEVE THAT SCIENCE AND LOGIC CAN BE MISUSED TO SUPPORT HIS CHILDISH BELIEF IN ANCIENT FAIRY TALES; AND AS LONG AS HE BELIEVES THAT A MURDEROUS GHOST IS STANDING BEHIND HIM AND LISTENING TO EVERY THOUGHT HE THINKS, THERE IS NOTHING ANYONE CAN DO FOR HIM.**

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**THE SCIENCE SEGMENT**

**FIRST PERMANENT ANTI-FOG COATING DEVELOPED**

**RESEARCHERS HAVE DEVELOPED THE VERY FIRST PERMANENT ANTI-FOG COATING. THE DETAILS OF THIS INNOVATION COULD ELIMINATE, ONCE AND FOR ALL, THE FOG ON EYEGLASSES, WINDSHIELDS, GOGGLES, CAMERA LENSES, AND ON ANY TRANSPARENT GLASS OR PLASTIC SURFACE.**

**FOG FORMS ON A SURFACE WHEN WATER VAPOR IN THE AIR CONDENSES IN FINE DROPLETS. DESPITE APPEARANCES, THE FOG THAT FORMS ON GLASSES IS NOT A CONTINUOUS FILM. IN FACT, IT CONSISTS OF TINY DROPLETS OF WATER THAT COALESCE ON THE SURFACE AND REDUCE LIGHT TRANSMISSION. A GOOD ANTI-FOG COATING SHOULD PREVENT THE FORMATION OF SUCH DROPLETS.**

**RESEARCHERS USED POLYVINYL ALCOHOL, A HYDROPHILIC COMPOUND THAT ALLOWS WATER TO SPREAD UNIFORMLY. THE CHALLENGE WAS TO FIRMLY ATTACH THE COMPOUND TO THE GLASS OR PLASTIC SURFACE. TO ACCOMPLISH THIS, RESEARCHERS APPLIED FOUR SUCCESSIVE LAYERS OF MOLECULES, WHICH FORMED STRONG BONDS WITH THEIR ADJOINING LAYERS, PRIOR TO ADDING THE ANTI-FOG COMPOUND OVER THIS BASE. THE RESULT WAS A THIN, TRANSPARENT, MULTILAYERED COATING THAT DOES NOT ALTER THE OPTICAL PROPERTIES OF THE SURFACE ON WHICH IT IS OVERLAID. IN ADDITION, THE CHEMICAL BONDS THAT JOIN THE DIFFERENT LAYERS ENSURE THE HARDNESS AND DURABILITY OF THE ENTIRE COATING.**

**EXISTING ANTI-FOG TREATMENTS DON'T HAVE THESE PROPERTIES AND WON'T WITHSTAND WASHING, SO THE PRODUCT APPLICATION MUST BE REPEATED REGULARLY. THIS COATING, ON THE OTHER HAND, IS PERMANENT.**

**TWO PATENTS ALREADY PROTECT THIS INVENTION, WHICH HAS NUMEROUS POTENTIAL APPLICATIONS, INCLUDING VEHICLE WINDSHIELDS, PROTECTIVE VISORS, CAMERA LENSES, BINOCULARS, OPTICAL INSTRUMENTS USED IN CHEMISTRY AND MEDICINE, AND CORRECTIVE LENSES. NEGOTIATIONS ARE ALREADY UNDERWAY WITH A MAJOR EYEWEAR COMPANY INTERESTED IN OBTAINING A LICENSE FOR THIS TECHNOLOGY.**

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**FAMOUS QUOTES**

**THELMA "BUTTERFLY" MCQUEEN (1911–1995) 84 YEARS.**

**SHE WAS AN AMERICAN ACTRESS. ORIGINALLY A DANCER, THE 28-YEAR-OLD MCQUEEN APPEARED AS PRISSY, SCARLETT O'HARA'S MAID IN THE 1939 FILM "GONE WITH THE WIND."**

**"AS MY ANCESTORS ARE FREE FROM SLAVERY,**

**I AM FREE OF THE SLAVERY OF RELIGION."**