

VIEWS OF GOD AMONG UNBELIEVERS AND THE UNORTHODOX

There are various beliefs of God, life, and the universe found outside of the Christian traditions and teachings. Atheism, agnosticism, and pantheism being those of greatest concern in western civilization.

I. _____

- A. Denies God's existence completely.
- B. Atheism comes in many formats and ways.
 - 1. The more prevalent practical atheist sees all religion as phony and lives as though there were no God.
 - 2. The dogmatic atheist openly proclaims his lack of belief in the existence of God.
 - 3. The virtual atheist has principles inconsistent with belief in God or views that define God in ways inconsistent with the norms, as in the case of "the force" of Star Wars fame.
- C. Many Atheists are presumptuous, arrogant, and assume absolute and exhaustive self-knowledge that disproves God in any traditional sense.
- D. Atheism's denial of God is really a matter of denying standards and is an attempt to be one's god to avoid accountability for any selfish behaviour.
- E. Atheism has _____ to offer mankind but _____ and _____.
- F. Evolution to atheists is not just a logical system of origins for them, but an emotionally favoured one. A supposed elimination of God and accountability leaves people free to act like the animals they supposedly evolved from.
 - 1. Evolution is a secular religion, one that acts like science, but requires faith in unintelligent inanimate natural processes to the degree of ascribing to them all the power of an immense supernatural intellect.
 - 2. Evolution truly is self-deception born of a desperate desire to avoid the reality of God.

II. _____

- A. A belief in God, but that it is not possible to know anything of the existence of God or the ultimate nature of the universe.
- B. Agnosticism advocates that all knowledge of God is _____ rather than absolute.
 - 1. Agnostics are often unwilling to accept as true anything beyond the scope of observation.
 - 2. To an agnostic, only one way to God is unacceptable, but that there are many ways to God. Any religion is an avenue to God.
- C. Like Atheism, agnosticism is nothing more than an attempt to ignore law and standards by claiming that the only law and standards that can be real are those seen in the natural world where sin and disorder are normative.
- D. Agnosticism is more _____ than atheism since it claims a humility of natural limitations that makes it seem more noble than outright atheism.

III. _____

- A. A doctrine which identifies God with the universe or regards the universe as a manifestation of God.

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- B. All parts of the material world are manifestations of God so that God is nature, and nature is God. There is no sense of _____ other than the animalistic one that nature dictates.
- B. Pantheism appears in various forms.
- C. Hinduism and Buddhism are primary world religions embracing forms of pantheism.
 - 1. Buddhism is a religion with something of a moral code, but it has no concept of God or the soul, dealing only with eliminating earthly suffering and evil, without defining any positive good.
 - 2. Hinduism does not concern itself with human welfare since there is a basic concept that all human problems are worked out naturally through the agency of reincarnation that is thought to eventually rectify injustices of an earlier life.

IV. Others

- A. _____
 - 1. Deism sees God only by His power in nature and not His being or person.
 - 2. It is a belief that God left His creation to _____ to work out his own destiny freely and with only the most general of divine supervision.
 - 3. Deists deny God’s active involvement in the history of the world and so deny the history of the Bible and the reality of Christ as God in the flesh.
 - 4. Deists would see no need for an active prayer life, a fear of God, living by faith, or the involvement of Christian service.
 - 5. Elements of this form of religion are visible in the modern world in the forms of Unitarianism and Modernism.
 - 6. Deism was rather popular to many people in the 17th and 18th century England and in the U.S.A, including President Thomas Jefferson, Thomas Paine, and Benjamin Franklin.
- B. _____
 - 1. Dualism centers on the concept of two distinct eternal forces, one of a good nature, and one of an evil nature., but with neither being the _____.
 - 2. Dualism seems to have developed from historic Persian Zoroastrianism through its offshoots of Manicheanism and Gnosticism.
 - 3. Often it distinguishes between the world of matter and the spirit realm., seeing god, or spirit, as good and matter, or material things, as evil.
 - 4. Sadly, it allows fatalistic attitudes towards _____ since it can be argued that it is hopeless to oppose a god of darkness who is just as strong as a god of light is.
 - 5. This view is made popular in New Age religion and Hollywood and television, such as the “force” of Star Wars.
- C. _____
 - 1. Polytheism is the belief in _____ gods, which is especially true in Hinduism.
 - 2. Polytheism characterizes religion having earthly views of God and involving man’s participation in immorality and inhumanity in many cases. The gods of polytheism are idols and often are exalted animals or images, or even a mixture of man and beast, like in Egyptian mythology.
 - 3. Any such gods that occupy a supposed higher realm may be seen as indulgent in all manner of _____, including sex and violence.
 - a. The gods of the Canaanites, such as Baal, Baalim, Baalpeor, Baalberith, Astaroth, Molech, and Dagon would be viewed under this category. Often worship was accompanied by sexual promiscuity (Numbers 25:1-8) or violence (human sacrifice).

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b. Other cultures who have had this viewpoint of religion: Greek, Roman, Egyptian, Irish, Native American, Norse, & Tribal.

D. _____

1. Belief in one supreme god. This was seen as very strange and one reason the Israelites and Christians were always viewed as outcasts.

V. Major Unorthodox Views

A. _____

1. Denies the _____ and the deity of Christ.
2. It has changed over the centuries from supernaturalistic to naturalistic and is today humanistic, exalting human reason.
3. As in all religion emanating from the sin nature in man, it attempts to place _____ above the authority of God.

B. _____

1. Claims to be the original church, but it began as a digression from biblical Christianity a few centuries after the death of the last apostle.
2. Its most basic unscriptural digression is the elevation of the autocracy of the church and _____ over scriptural authority.
3. It teaches salvation through the _____ on basis of human works and apart from the Spirit. It also teaches purgatory, the concept that there is an unseen world where people pay for their own sins by suffering torment in order to receive a place in heaven.
4. It also places mediators like Mary or “saints” ordained by the church between Christ and man, and so places them between God and man, which is in contradiction of 1 Timothy 2:5.

THE NAMES OF GOD.

I. _____

A. Used 2,570 times, it refers to God's power and might. It commands fear and reverence and has a plural sense.

II. _____

A. Four compounds of his name. There are two significant places where this name was used in the Old Testament. One came from the lips of Jerusalem's first sovereign, and the other from history's first sinner.

B. Means "might" or "_____".

1. *Elyon*: The strongest strong One or Most High.

- a. Jerusalem's first sovereign (Melchizedek) (Genesis 14:17-20)
- b. History's first sinner (Satan) (Isaiah 14:13, 14)

2. *Roi*: The strong One who _____.

- a. In Genesis 16 an angered and barren Sarai had cast into the wilderness her pregnant and arrogant handmaiden Hagar. When all hope for survival had fled, this pagan Egyptian girl was visited and ministered to by El Roi himself—the strong God who sees.

3. *Shaddai*: The _____ One.

- a. Used forty-eight times in Old Testament.

4. *Olam*: The _____ God.

- a. Isaiah 40 is usually regarded as one of the greatest Old Testament chapters. The prophet begins by predicting both the first and second advent (coming) of Christ. He then contrasts the awesome power of the true God with the miserable impotence of all idols. But carnal Israel had trouble accepting all this, wondering just how these wonderful events could transpire to answer their doubts.
- b. Isaiah declares in Isaiah 40:28-31: "Hast thou not known? hast thou not heard, that the everlasting God, the Lord, the Creator of the ends of the earth, fainteth not, neither is weary? there is no searching of his understanding. He giveth power to the faint; and to them that have no might he increaseth strength. Even the youths shall faint and be weary, and the young men shall utterly fall: But they that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; and they shall walk, and not faint."

III. _____: Master, Lord.

A. God owns all his creation. It indicates possession and _____ dominion.

B. Malachi 1:6: "A son honoureth his father, and a servant his master: if then I be a father, where is mine honour? and if I be a master, where is my fear? saith the Lord of hosts unto you, O priests, that despise my name. And ye say, Wherein have we despised thy name?"

C. The Hebrew Old Testament name *Adonai* and its Greek New Testament counterpart *Kurios* describe the relationship between master and slave. *Adonai* thus carries with it a twofold implication.

D. *The master has a right to expect* _____.

1. Robert Lightner writes:

“In Old Testament times the slave was the absolute possession of his master, having no rights of his own. His chief business was to carry out the wishes of his master. The slave had a relationship and responsibility different from that of the hired servant. The hired servant could quit if he did not like the orders of his master. But not so with the slave; he could do nothing but obey (cf. Genesis 24:1-12). (The God of the Bible, p. 116)

E. *The slave may expect* _____.

1. Again, to quote Lightner:

“The slave had no worry of his own. It was the master’s business to provide food, shelter, and the necessities of life. Since the slave was the possession of the master, his needs became the master’s. Obedience was the only condition for this provision. This truth was marvellously displayed in Paul, who was himself a bond slave, when he assured the Philippians that God would supply all their needs (Philippians 4:19). Only the obedient slave can expect this from his master.” (*Ibid.* p. 117)

IV. _____.

A. God's most common name. It occurs 6,823 times. The self-existent One, the God of the covenant (Genesis 2:4). The Promise Keeper (Exodus 6:3-9).

B. Jews refused to pronounce this name, considering it too holy and using the word Adonai in its place.

C. Nine compound names of Jehovah are:

1. **Jireh:** *The Lord will* _____. (*Genesis 22:13, 14*)

2. **Nissi:** *The Lord, my* _____. (*Exodus 17:15*)

3. **Shalom:** *The Lord is* _____. (*Judges 6:24*)

4. **Sabaoth:** *The Lord of* _____.

a. *Sabaoth* is derived from the Hebrew word *tsaba*, meaning “host.”

b. The Lord of hosts is a reference to the captain of heaven’s armies. These armies are said to be composed of angels. (See Psalm 68:17; 104:4; 148:2; Matthew 26:53.) Christ himself is their leader. (See Joshua 5:14.)

c. The great prophet Isaiah describes his vision during which he was allowed to see Jehovah of hosts. (Isaiah 6:1-3)

5. **Maccaddeschcem:** *The Lord thy* _____. (*Exodus 31:13*)

6. **Rohi (Raah):** *The Lord my* _____. (*Psalms 23:1*)

7. **Tsidkenu:** *The Lord our* _____. (*Jeremiah 23:6*)

a. According to Jeremiah the official name for the Messiah during the future millennium will be Jehovah-Tsidkenu.

8. **Shammah:** *The Lord who is* _____. (*Ezekiel 48:35*)

9. **Rapha:** *The Lord our* _____. (*Exodus 15:26*)