

## **Responding to the New Atheists' attacks on the God of the Old Testament-5: "God is Proud/Arrogant" (part 2)**

In our last study, we noted the charges of arrogance and pride leveled by the New Atheists against God, namely that He is proud or arrogant. We saw that pride includes the idea of falsehoods about self where one takes credit where credit isn't due, and that humility is the realistic assessment of self—both weaknesses and strengths. True humility does not deny true abilities. On a human level, the humble person always recognizes that he is what he is by the grace of God. God is not only not proud, for He has a realistic view of self, but is very humble.

Yahweh, the God of the Old Testament, is none other than the Lord Jesus Christ. The great "I AM, Esse," of Exodus 3:14 is the Lord Jesus Christ:

John 8:57 The Jews therefore said to Him, "You are not yet fifty years old, and have you seen Abraham?" 58 Jesus said to them, "Truly, truly, I say to you, before Abraham was born, I am."

The God of Abraham became a man. This is what God did in the Incarnation. Being/Esse became *a* being, the Subject became an object, God became a man, I AM became a He. The God of the Old Testament is best described as Esse. Esse is purely actual. We like all of creation are made up of potentiality and actuality. We are always suffering change, in our existence we are potentially this or that, but God is purely actual. He acts upon all things (all things in the universe are contingent; they cannot be the cause of their own existence), while we are acted upon. Divine nature, Esse, cannot be acted upon. It cannot be changed. It is not passive or potential. Only when Esse assumes human nature can He be acted upon by us. And then He is acted upon even to the point of man's scorns, thorns, and spikes. In the incarnation, "I AM (ESSE)" of John 1:1 became the "HE WAS" of John 1:14. Then, on Calvary, that *I* who took on a human nature became cursed as a substitution for the sins of all of mankind. Does this sound anything like arrogance or more like love, humility, and complete self-giving?

2 Corinthians 5:18 Now all these things are from God, who reconciled us to Himself through Christ, and gave us the ministry of reconciliation, 19 namely, that God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself, not counting their trespasses against them, and He has committed to us the word of reconciliation. 20 Therefore, we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God were entreating through us; we beg you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God.

1 John 2:2 and He Himself is the propitiation for our sins; and not for ours only, but also for those of the whole world.

John 1:29 The next day he saw Jesus coming to him, and said, "Behold, the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!"

So much for the myth that God is arrogant. It certainly is a far cry from the attitude of Dawkins against those he does not like—like God!

The God of the Old Testament is the incarnate Christ, the very instantiation of gentleness humility, the One who gives the weary rest for their souls if they will only come to Him (Matt. 11:27-29). He came to serve (Luke 22:27) and to “give His life a ransom for man” (Mark 10:45). Philippians 2 marvelously displays the depths to which God is willing to go for our salvation: God the Son empties Himself of the use of His divine attributes during the incarnation (Philip. 2:6-8), becoming a *slave* who dies fully naked, for all to see—in great shame and humiliation.

The argument of the village atheists, that God is a divine, pompous windbag seeking to have his ego stroked by human flattery and never thinks about anyone but Himself is patently false. On the contrary, His divine service to all human beings is truly without parallel or analogy in all of human history. Wow!

Blessed,

*Pastor Don*