

Responding to the New Atheists' attacks on the God of the Old Testament-6: "God is Proud/Arrogant" (part 3)

We are examining the various "popular" charges from the New Atheists (Dawkins, Harris, Dennett, Hitchens) against God. We have noted the true meaning of pride, arrogance, and humility, and that God, as best illustrated in the incarnation, is not only Supreme Being (Esse) without any delusions whatsoever, His humility in becoming man is unparalleled and without analogy in human history. His glory and humility far exceed even the greatest imaginations of man as represented in the various representations of God throughout history. Man never came close to even inventing a God that had attributes of love and humility as we see in the true God. The fact that humility and humiliation of the God-man is recognized as glory is well-documented:

John 12:23 And Jesus answered them, saying, "The hour has come for the Son of Man to be glorified. 24 "Truly, truly, I say to you, unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies, it remains by itself alone; but if it dies, it bears much fruit.

John 13:31 When therefore he had gone out, Jesus said, "Now is the Son of Man glorified, and God is glorified in Him; 32 if God is glorified in Him, God will also glorify Him in Himself, and will glorify Him immediately.

God's greatest moment of glory is not in the creation of the universe ex-nihilo or in the sustaining of all particles of the universe or even in His omniscience, which knows all things as well as all contingencies and counterfactuals (the outcome of any different choice in any matter). God's greatest glory is in His greatest humiliation and shame—when He takes the form of a slave and suffers death on a cross for man's sins (including the sins of the New Atheists):

2 Corinthians 5:21 He made Him who knew no sin to be sin on our behalf, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.

Philippians 2:5-11 Have this attitude in yourselves which was also in Christ Jesus, 6 who, although He existed in the form of God, did not regard equality with God a thing to be grasped, 7 but emptied Himself, taking the form of a bond-servant, and being made in the likeness of men. 8 And being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross. 9 Therefore also God highly exalted Him, and bestowed on Him the name which is above every name, 10 that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of those who are in heaven, and on earth, and under the earth, 11 and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.
God's greatest glory is in Him becoming a man to serve and save man:

Luke 22:27 "For who is greater, the one who reclines at the table, or the one who serves? Is it not the one who reclines at the table? But I am among you as the one who serves.

Mark 10:45 "For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many."

Wow! You certainly do not see that kind of attitude in the New Atheists or among any of the gods of man's own creation: e.g. Baal, Ashtoreth, Zeus, Poseidon, Astarte, Anat, Horon, Utu, Zeus, Poseidon, Uranus, Proteus— ad infinitum ad nauseam. With all of the brain power that man could muster, man never could conceive of a God that would love man so much so as to become a man (add a human nature) endure mistreatment by man and be judged for man's sinfulness.

I recognize that modern man no longer believes in these wrathful, lustful, petty, and arrogant gods, but what about Allah? The number of people worldwide who believe in Allah is about 1.5 billion, ranking second to those who believe in Christ at 2.1 billion. It is well known that one of the reasons Muslims reject Jesus Christ as God is precisely because of His humility in dying on the cross. Allah (unlike Yahweh and the God-man) is arrogant; in fact, one of the names given to Allah in the Quran is "the Most Proud" (Surah 59:23). Furthermore, Surah 51:56 says that humans were only created to worship him, i.e. to feed his ego. The hadith literature expressly says that Allah loves nothing more than to be praised and actually praises himself, (*Sahih al-Bukhari*, Volume 6, Book 60, 158, 160). Allah's pride and desire for praise stands in stark contrast with the characteristic of the true God Yahweh, whom the Holy Bible teaches is humble and meek and loves those who are poor in spirit:

Matthew 11:28 "Come to Me, all who are weary and heavy-laden, and I will give you rest. 29 "Take My yoke upon you, and learn from Me, for I am gentle and humble in heart; and you shall find rest for your souls. 30 "For My yoke is easy, and My load is light."

John 3:16 "For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish, but have eternal life.

1 Peter 3:18 For Christ also died for sins once for all, the just for the unjust, in order that He might bring us to God, having been put to death in the flesh, but made alive in the spirit;

The charges of arrogance against the God whose glory radiates from the cross is beyond being coherent! The glory which radiates from the cross is the same combination of divine qualities which God revealed to Moses as mercy and justice, and which we have seen in the Word made flesh as “grace and truth.” This is God’s goodness, which was displayed in the theatre of the cross. The splendid theatre revealed both the Father and the Son. Although the glory of God shines through the Old Testament—we can see this with His pleading with fratricidal Cain as well as the Israelites in the desert, and in all creatures high and below—it never shines more brightly than in the cross. If it be objected that nothing could be less glorious than Christ’s death, I reply that in that death we see the boundless glory which is concealed from the ungodly, which is exactly the problem in the New Atheists. They strut around with their bestsellers on how arrogant God is, all the while blind to the beauty of the incarnation and the cross. Does it really escape their notice just how arrogantly and angrily they act against God and all Christians? Are they clueless as to how arrogant they must be for insisting that all parents who teach their children about God are guilty of child abuse? Don’t they see their own hubris? Aren’t they aware of their arrogant tirades? At least the “Old Atheists” (e.g., Bertrand Russell, Anthony Flew) had philosophical arguments for their atheism, even if they were flimsy. All the New Atheists do is engage in name-calling, which is a sure sign that they are losing the debate. It is unfortunate and a sign of the times that American public has such an appetite for their books and bilge that slam God. It is most unfortunate that many Christians are actually intimidated by these guys who have such lame diatribes against God. Any Christian with a basic framework of philosophical realism can recognize their fallacies a mile away.

On the Glory Road,

Pastor Don