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It is more reasonable to believe in the Christian god than not - Xeno v LC

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11th September 2012, 09:18 AM

#1



Protium
...
Administrator

Join Date: Dec 2008
Location: Perth Western Australia
Posts: 13,062

It is more reasonable to believe in the Christian god than not - Xeno v LC

Well the cobwebs are well and truly blow out of the Debate Form 😊

Welcome to Logical Christian and Xeno.

It is more reasonable to believe in the Christian god than not

The format will be:

- * **Logical Christian** will make his opening statement.
- * a rebuttal by **Xeno**
- * then five posts each regarding the topic,
- * and one closing post each.

10,000 character count per post is the default. From memory this has been confused as 10,000 words in the past so I think it fine if users go over the 10,000 character limit as long as they post the second post immediately.

Any figures or data must be referenced, or forfeit.

A three-day response time will be allowed on each post rebuttal. Late response will be deemed a forfeit.

The commentary thread is set up [here](#) and is open to all posters.

Commenters are asked to be fair within reason: sledging or prompting may be frowned upon.

Over to Logical Christian for his opening statement.

...

11th September 2012, 10:12 PM

#2 



[Logical Christian](#) 

Junior Member

Join Date: Aug 2012
Posts: 16

It is more reasonable to believe in the Christian god than not - Xeno v LC

Thank you to Xeno for the invitation to take part in this debate, and the administrators of this forum for making it happen.

I don't think I've ever felt myself being in a position as hopeless as this – being part of a debate where my role is to convince a tight community of atheists that it is more reasonable to believe in the Christian god than not.

It's not the task of personally and logically coming to such a conclusion, it's the inevitability of an audience that mostly will never seriously examine externally, and with unbiased intentions, any claims I share.

I appreciate this is the home ground of atheists, people committed to the concept of no gods existing, and it was my choice to accept this debate and even confirm the subject for debate, so I'm not complaining about ending up in this situation, I just acknowledging the huge mountain in front of me.

Before I start, let me applaud what I perceive is the mantra of atheists that leads to such disbelief in God: evidence, evidence, evidence!

Perhaps most will agree with me that believing something without any sort of evidence is totally foolish. I also think that believing something as fact, or dismissing something as false, without researching such claims further for oneself, is equally as foolish.

The most I can ask from anyone reading this debate is to give honest research into what I present – whether you've been some sort of Christian before or not.

If after honestly investigating you find it to be made up, then you can't be held accountable for your actions. If you actually find truth to my claims, then it's up to you what you do with that information.

Through all the research and musings about earth, life and gods I've done so far, I believe I have found a logical path that suggests it is more reasonable to believe in the Christian god than not.

In this debate, I'm not planning on using professor-ish words, nor recite lengthy studies or long Biblical passages. I will merely share an overview of the logical process and conclusions that have lead me to where I am now in my belief in a Biblical God and you can decide for yourself if it's enough to believe.

This means I may be too general and conceptual for some, however, in my generality, I hope to share the cornerstone concepts that have me in my beliefs regarding the Biblical God I have today and give you enough information to be able to researching for yourself, so you can see things in their full context.

Perhaps on the surface it may too seem like I'm trotting out some old arguments that you perceive as having been proven wrong in the past. I ask that you listen carefully to what I say, and even what I don't say that might usually accompany such arguments. Don't jump to any conclusions or you'll miss my points.

Enough, preamble. Just remember, it's your choice what you do with my claims, either just believe them (foolish) just disregard them (foolish too) or investigate them so you can know for yourself if I'm 'onto' something or 'on' something.

Well, though fluffy to some, perhaps the best place to start is at the beginning of my perceived logical steps towards believing that there is reasonable probability of a Biblical God actually

existing.

Note: The lack of Biblical references in this opening line of Q and A are due to:

- 1: not only is it to 'fluffy' to get bogged down on
- 2: we haven't got any credibility earned for the Bible yet to bother
- 3: and the Bible and science I feel are somewhat agreed on these first points
– so we're 'generally speaking' for now - references later when it matters more.

My first and most basic musing is this:

Is it even possible for a god to exist in the first place?

This question leads me to the following line of questions and answers:

1. Is it theoretically possible for there to even be any other life in existence, other than that on earth, let alone a god, that we have no scientific evidence for yet? I'm talking any life, ranging from micro bacteria sized or smaller, to creatures the size of our moon or bigger.

From a Christian perspective, yes, the Bible suggests we are not all that God created. From science's evolutionary perspective, yes also. This universe is so large, and so much time has passed, that there were enough combinations of evolving life conditions to have happened that we ended up with the incredible earth, filled with life forms, we live in today. In fact, the universe is so large and been around so long that if the evolution process caused life on earth, it probably has created life elsewhere also.

2. Is this life, elsewhere in the universe, different to life on earth?

From a Christian perspective, yes. Life forms elsewhere are different to on earth. From science's evolutionary perspective, yes also. Life forms elsewhere would have evolved in different conditions and ended up in entirely different ecosystems and so formed very differently.

3. Could life, elsewhere in the universe, be of greater intelligence?

From a Christian perspective, yes. There are 'creatures' that are more intelligent than earth's 'creatures'. From science's evolutionary perspective, yes also. Life forms elsewhere would have evolved in different conditions and ended up either much more or less intelligent than humans.

4. Could life, elsewhere in the universe be made of different 'substances' then on earth?

From a Christian perspective, yes. There are 'creatures' that are of different 'substances' to earth's 'creatures'. From science's evolutionary perspective, yes also. Life forms elsewhere would have evolved in different conditions and ended up consisting of many different 'substances'.

5. Could life, elsewhere in the universe have different senses (sight, hearing, smell, taste, touch) then on earth?

From a Christian perspective, yes. There are 'creatures' that can 'sense' differently to earth's 'creatures'. From science's evolutionary perspective, yes also. Life forms elsewhere would have evolved in different conditions and would have ended up both missing some of our senses and also be able to sense differently and different things to what creatures can on earth.

6. Could life, elsewhere in the universe have different 'functions', abilities or 'powers' then on earth? For example, some animals can change their skin colour. Some life forms can reproduce on their own. Some can fly. Some can undergo metamorphosis.

From a Christian perspective, yes. There are 'creatures' that can do 'different stuff' to earth's 'creatures'. From science's evolutionary perspective, yes also. Life forms elsewhere would have evolved in different conditions and would have ended up with different 'abilities' than to that of creatures on earth.

7. Could there be life that is so far away we could not see it?

Bible says yes. Science would definitely agree on this one.

8. Is it possible for there to be creatures that we can not sense on earth with our 5 senses or with the technology we have developed?

Again, the Bible says yes.

Science, I suspect, would also conclude yes. Bacteria was in existence for many years before it was discovered. Things like gamma rays existed too long before its discovery. (Yes, this is not a 'life form' but an example of things existing before they were able to be 'seen'.)

One last question in this founding round.

9. If it's possible that you can't see, hear, touch, taste, feel or measure with current technology an item/creature/god that does exist – could it be that it is impossible for science to collect evidence of such an item/creature/god to prove it exists?

I would say yes. As technology and science knowledge increases, we discover more and more knowledge of new 'substances' and creatures and more. I have no doubt there is more to discover in the universe science currently knows nothing about.

So it is true, because we haven't evidence of 'item a' that does not mean 'item a' does not exist.

Ok, ok, I'm sure many are already screaming 'But all this doesn't prove anything! – because something is possible does not mean it is!!!'

And you're 100% correct. Santa and the tooth fairy could still be real so far from what we've so far walked through.

However, this was a worthy place to start the line of questions, as if the answer was a resounding 'no' to the above questions, there would be no possibility of there being a god. Rendering this debate over immediately.

I believe the answer to these questions, even from a science perspective, is yes.

This means we have confirmed as far as the Bible is concerned and also Science there could be a god (or more) in existence.

A notion that it's impossible for there to be a god is incorrect.

And again, to clarify, possibility does not prove actuality – it's not logical nor the conclusion I draw from these first Q and A's.

A lot of talk to prove possibility and nothing more in this opening post, time to now get on with something more substantial, hey!

Next post.

Cheerio,

Logical Christian 😊

13th September 2012, 12:46 PM

#3 



[Xeno](#) 

Plenty more where that one came from.

Join Date: May 2010
Location: Altitude 700 m
Posts: 9,997

 **Re: It is more reasonable to believe in the Christian god than not - Xeno v LC**

I thank Logical Christian (in whose forgiveness I trust if I henceforth refer to him or her as LC) for agreeing readily both to the debate and to the topic, which we settled quickly between us.

My reason for sounding out the debate idea with LC was my perception that they believed they had a rational case but were making so little headway toward presenting it that it seemed as though it would never emerge. The debate format gives clear air for LC to present their ideas toward the key question, while it is incumbent on me to explain my counter-position clearly rather

than allowing assumptions of what I mean.

This response is in two main parts. In the first, I shall give some context and definitions for the debate, and the basis of my case for the negative, and in the second I shall address the content of the first post by LC.

Context

The topic contains two points of differentiation:

It is more reasonable ... than not"

and

... "the Christian god."

"Reasonable" is defined in the Australian Oxford Dictionary or the Concise Oxford (more extensively) as

1. having sound judgement; moderate; ready to listen to reason
2. in accordance with reason; not absurd

with a third definition which trades on the first of the above. We assume the first for the parties in this debate. The second is pertinent to the topic but not a great differentiator until we take the qualifier "more ... than not" which suggests that our practical positions on which we should be judged in this debate are:

- LC: based on arguments from reason, the likelihood of the Christian god existing is greater than 50%, up to 100%.
- Xeno: based on arguments from reason, the likelihood of the Christian god existing is less than 50%, down to 0%.

My apparently positive position is merely counter to the first, although I have excluded [doxastic](#) agnosticism, that the likelihood of the christian god includes 50%, and will argue that mine is the more reasonable position.

Given we are basing the discussion on what is more reasonable, it is not relevant for me to address belief based on emotion: questions of revelation, of warm fuzzy feelings, or Pascal's Wager for example.

Reason in this context may be defined as covering:

- Sense data
- Inference
- Deduction

What of data from report though, information from other people or records by other people? Data by report simply adds a layer of indirection to the above, and the same components are applicable. A principal utility of science is the reduction of probable error in data by report, so that not only experimenters or investigators but other people may reasonably rely on these reports as illustrating working models or theories. These are then used to make planes fly or to keep the paste on your toothbrush.

Science reduces likely error by repetition of controlled studies with open information. Those models which generally

- are based on principles rather than instances;
- explain known data;
- allow testable predictions;
- have a record of absorbing new data without structural modification; and
- show extensive application in their field

acquire the status of theories, reliable models. On this epistemology, we avoid walking in front of busses but happily board them with the intent of reaching a destination.

Anything which is capable of providing sensory information, whether sensed by us naturally or indirectly through instruments (e.g. X-rays), whether sensed as itself or by its effects (e.g.

gravity), is open to the view of reason as I have described it. That which has no observable effect can not be characterised other than by deduction from accepted inferences, an area fraught with poor inferences, equivocating deductions, and special pleading as is being discussed elsewhere.

The nub of my position with regard to any god has been expressed by Graham Oppy in his [review of Craig's critique of naturalism](#)

Quote:

Originally Posted by **Oppy**

... naturalism is most plausibly taken to consist of (something like) the following pair of claims:

1. there are no entities which are causally related to things hereabouts but which are not spatially related to things hereabouts (hence: no souls, no spooks, no entelechies, no gods);
2. there is no sufficiently good reason for believing in the kinds of entities which are denied to exist in (1).

On this way of characterising naturalism, it emerges as a kind of metaphysical conjecture which is justified by the observation that, hitherto, none of the kinds of entities mentioned in (1) has managed to earn its theoretical keep: hitherto, no sufficient reason for believing in souls, spooks, entelechies, gods--or any other entities which are causally related to things hereabouts but not spatially related to things hereabouts--has been discovered. Of course, on this characterisation, naturalism emerges as a tentative and revisable conjecture: but that, it seems to me, is how it should be.

Rebuttal of the OP

My opponent has sought to establish a foundation for their later discourse. I shall discuss three aspects of LC's post and through those will show that the supposed foundation is a nullity; indeed that the very surface on which LC attempts to build that foundation is a void above a gravity well, from which no information escapes. Specifically I will discuss

- that nothing emerges from the numbered argument presented by LC;
- that despite LC's apparent best intentions, the argument is circular, as I will demonstrate by drawing some corresponding circles; and
- some commentary on evidence and its absence.

The argument is a nullity, nothing emerges.

I invite readers to travel through the nine points of LC's foundational argument substituting in each instance the word "Hindu" for "Christian", or (as LC suggests) "tooth-fairyist", or "Phantom Ferretist". One emerges at the end with no thing *which is distinguishable from any other (unknown) thing*.

The argument is tendentious by referring either to scientific knowledge or to a christian view. If one substitutes a Phantom Ferretist view, or a Puppeteerist view, then no information has changed. To say "there may be something" does not of itself allow one to define that something. Something exists is in fact a truism. It is meaningless without characterisation. If one has other data supporting the nature of the unknown thing then that data can be brought forward, but such data is not improved in any respect by the notion there may be something.

Further, the moment one characterises the something, one reduces the likelihood of its existence in the absence of cogent data. By way of example. I show you a closed box. At this point you have a 50% chance of saying that there is, or is not, something inside the box (omitting pedantries about air, dust and so on). In the 50% case there is something, you have no information about it beyond that it is contained in the box (not a relevant constraint for this analogy).

If not only were you to say "there is something in the box" (50% chance) but also "it is blue" then your likelihood of being correct has already dropped to negligible proportions. If you further specify the actual nature of the thing in the box based not on any evidence about the box contents but on having read "Beowulf" or "The Iliad" then your conclusion can not be considered *more reasonable than not*.

In a longer-winded way, we have seen and I have critiqued a simple god-of-the-gaps argument,

yet there is no reason to place any god in there, let alone the christian god, whether coloured-in or not.

The argument displays circularity.

At an early point in the opening post, LC says

Quote:

we haven't got any credibility earned for the Bible yet to bother.

Indeed, so why do the following nine points refer to "a Christian perspective"? Why not to a Hindu perspective, as already discussed above? It is circular to refer to a christian perspective when no action whatsoever has been taken to establish the validity of a christian perspective. One can not say "from an (unsupported) christian perspective, something might exist" and then go on (as it appears LC is likely to do) to say "the something that might exist supports the christian perspective".

Questions of evidence

Quote:

Originally Posted by **Logical Christian**

If it's possible that you can't see, hear, touch, taste, feel or measure with current technology an item/creature/god that does exist - could it be that it is impossible for science to collect evidence of such an item/creature/god to prove it exists?

Referring back to my argument and empty box analogy earlier, on what basis can one say a *particular* thing exists? By the same token, if something is without effect, without impact, then not only can it not be characterised but it is without relevance, for only by having an effect can it be relevant; yet all mythologies speak of beings which have effects. Effects are amenable to investigation by reason as I described in **Context** at the beginning of this post. If there are no effects, then there is no reason to believe in any characterisation of that which is absent.

The absence of reliable reasons for any god tells us, *a priori*, that there is most probably no god to be discovered, and even though the true chance is in fact negligible, the mere lesser likelihood is sufficient to sustain the negative on this topic. That is, that the only rationally supportable position is doxastically atheist, that there is less than a 50% probability that there is a christian (or any identifiable) god.

LC states in their post

Quote:

A notion that it's impossible for there to be a god is incorrect.

Perhaps so, but that is not the topic. On the topic question of what is more reasonable to believe, no evidence at all has been adduced on the affirmative side for any god, let alone a christian god, while there is sound evidence (lack of effects) supporting the negative side.

There are [still] no good arguments for gods.

15th September 2012, 10:26 PM

#4 



[Logical Christian](#) 

Junior Member

Join Date: Aug 2012
Posts: 16

It is more reasonable to believe in the Christian god than not - Xeno v LC

Thanks for your response, Xeno. Particularly for the context and definitions of the debate topic, which I commend your eloquent explanation. I throw in my full support of your outline.

In quick response to your rebuttals:

Quote:

Originally Posted by **Xeno** 
The argument is a nullity, nothing emerges.

I totally agree with you. As I said, other than proving it's plausible for a god to exist, with no arguments towards there actually being a god in existence, nothing's been proved. The one thing that was attempted to be gained through the line of Q&A was to help those who thought it's impossible for a god to even exist. Hence the time spent showing the debate wasn't null on that premise before we even started.

Quote:

Originally Posted by **Xeno** 
It is circular to refer to a christian perspective when no action whatsoever has been taken to establish the validity of a christian perspective

I know what you mean, but in the context so far this really isn't an issue (later it would be, for sure!). The scientific line of conclusions were in line with the Christian conclusions. If Christianity was disproved in the beginning, the line of conclusions would remain the same anyway. As the topic refers to Christianity, and my side of the debate's from a Christianity perspective also, I was merely including what this perspective is, along with science's. Obviously I need to ultimately establish why I find Christianity to be valid, and will do, but while I agree with atheist complaint about circular reasoning regarding the Bible in arguments others resort to, it really wasn't applicable in this first line of arguments.

Finally,

Quote:

Originally Posted by **Xeno** 
*Referring back to my argument and empty box analogy earlier, on what basis can one say a particular thing exists? By the same token, if something is without effect, without impact, then not only can it not be characterised but it is without relevance, for only by having an effect can it be relevant; yet all mythologies speak of beings which have effects. Effects are amenable to investigation by reason as I described in **Context** at the beginning of this post. If there are no effects, then there is no reason to believe in any characterisation of that which is absent.
The absence of reliable reasons for any god tells us, a priori, that there is most probably no god to be discovered, and even though the true chance is in fact negligible, the mere lesser likelihood is sufficient to sustain the negative on this topic.*

I agree with this sentiment! If I had more than 50% of doubt that there was no impact, effect or reasons for a god, then it's fairytale stuff. However in the following posts I will do my best to share why I believe there's enough impact, effect and reasons, to find it more reasonable to believe than not.

Ok, so far in my logical progression towards my rational of believing it's more reasonable to believe in the Biblical God than not, I have only really determined it's possible for there to be other creatures in the universe, a god even, that are able to go undetected and so avoid scientific evidence gathering opportunities back up their existence. I've also clearly noted that possibility does not mean fact – and by no means have any other conclusions been reached so far. Time to move on.

The biggest problem science has with any attempt to prove (or disprove) a god's existence is that science does not have the tools to detect or measure any 'substances' that it can not detect or measure.

And if there was a god, that could do almighty things, not doubt it would be made of a 'substance' that is far more 'versatile' than what we know about now.

Science can't measure general wind speed with a thermometer, or weight with a light meter. If there is a god, science does not seem to have the tools to 'see' or 'measure' it when it wants to be hidden.

This is a big problem for scientist who desire scientific evidence to prove god.

So if there's no traditional scientific evidence, are there any other kinds of evidence available? I think so, and it is these other evidences that have lead me to a logical conclusion that it is more reasonable to believe in the Christian God than not.

Here's a fishy analogy to kick us off.

What does a deep sea fish that has never seen, heard, smelt, felt or tasted a human being know about humans?

Nothing except what it has heard and read about humans (assuming fish talk about or document such things, for the purpose of this analogy)

Because the fish has not witnessed humans for itself, which we know neither proves or disproves human existence, the question is how could a fish gain knowledge or study human existence without an encounter with a human?

Other than waiting for a chance sighting of James Cameron in his deep see sub, eyewitness accounts by others are the only way this fish could learn of humans. If other fish tell what they saw, or what their great, great, great grand fish saw long ago, and/or documented it for future generations to read about, that's a form of evidence of human existence.

The conclusion I get from this musing is not only that it's possible to know nothing about a 'higher being' but for them to still exist (covered), but because the fish can't gather any scientific evidence, the only way its knowledge can be formed of human existence is by other's eyewitness accounts.

Our courts use eyewitness testimony as a type of evidence to determine what truth is all the time. Given enough eyewitness accounts that are cohesive enough to prove the testimonies were neither 1. so way out of cohesion with the case or 2. too cohesive (as in rehearsed), eyewitness accounts are evidence enough for our courts to deliver a verdict.

Without scientific evidence of a god, perhaps, like the fish, the main other options to prove gods existence are:

- 1) Your own personal experience (which is not something you can switch on and study if you've never had an experience like this)
- 2) Examining community eyewitness testimonies and see if they are credible.

People say they've see a LOT of stuff. So it's a matter of really weeding out the truthful from the crazy or entrepreneurial and finding credible accounts.

So, where are we now?

There could be a god, it may not be scientifically provable, but if we can get enough **credible** eyewitness accounts, then we could believe.

The 'credible' part of the statement is paramount!

There's claims of many gods being in existence, and encounters with them, and this of course includes the God of the Bible.

No one, or even many, alleged eyewitness accounts with a god makes it automatically. Perhaps more probable the more that make a claim, yes on one level, but by no means does an eyewitness account prove anything unless the claims are credible.

Before I move on, for those watching carefully and picking up on there being 'eyewitness accounts of an undetectable god', Let me clarify to help you see the difference.

A god would be generally undetectable the majority of time, as the last post explored. However, upon the occasions a god or angels make a visible/audible encounter with humans, it's not like they hang around to let you swab for DNA. That makes them able to be 'seen' but not studied in a scientific sense. (I'm digressing, moving on.)

One of the major records of supposed eyewitness accounts with a god is the Bible.

But why the Bible and none of the other gods in alleged circulation?

First, The Bible is where my conclusion ends up, and I'm here to show how I came to such belief. Second, I'm not going to attempt to refute all the other claims of gods here as the topic is about the possibility of the Christian God.

And third, I know atheists don't believe in any of the other gods anyway, so no need to prove they don't exist. Instead I'm going to focus what makes me more than 50% sure the Biblical God is real.

My conclusion, and the topic of this debate, really all comes down to this: if the Biblical God exists as stated in the Bible, the Bible must be true. The two go hand in hand. You can't have Bible truth and no Biblical God, nor a Biblical God and no Bible truth.

Yes, having no Biblical God and no Bible truth is the other possibility, what Xeno is arguing. (Those on circular reasoning watch, note carefully I'm only saying 'it's all or nothing', I'm not claiming to have proved anything with this statement)

So essentially, to show that it is more reasonable than not to believe in the God of the Bible, I need to find credibility in the Bible, and its collection of supposed eyewitness accounts of its God. And it is here where I'll begin next post, where I can devote the full post to such critical a topic, without all this setup.

While I still have a little space left in this post let me use it to share this.

I have experienced what seems the majority opinion by atheists that if the Biblical God existed, he would be a cruel god – one not to be admired at all.

This is one argument some use against there being a Biblical God (why I included it just now).

I know one group of atheists never claim such things and cry 'what's the point in proving God is Love if I don't believe he exists to begin with' – which is what the atheist line should be. However there are other atheists who keep bringing up popular accusations about the Biblical God.

I can understand a shallow look into the Bible or the world's current conditions leading to conclusion of God being nasty if he existed, but I can equally see the lack of research and understanding by those who claim such things—even by those who used to be Christians.

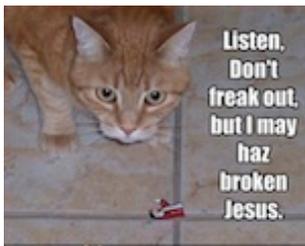
Explaining why there is not a hell that will burn forever and why bad stuff isn't stopped by an all powerful all loving God, is provable but not this debates topic. I just wanted to say, it shows a lack of in depth study and logic by those to claim God is cruel, and it is not an argument that for his non existence. If the Bible is true, God is by definition Love as it says. There are other logical and acceptable answers why we suffer. Another time.

Back soon

Logical Christian 😊

16th September 2012, 02:42 PM

#5 



[Xeno](#) 

Plenty more where that one came from.

Join Date: May 2010
Location: Altitude 700 m
Posts: 9,997

Re: It is more reasonable to believe in the Christian god than not - Xeno v LC

I appreciate that the context I laid out is the proper basis for discussion, and accordingly, remind readers of the early paragraphs in my Opening Statement, from the words "Reason in this context may be defined as..." through to "... fraught with poor inferences, equivocating deductions, and special pleading as is being discussed elsewhere."

In this context, LC equivocates in the following section of this first post. After discussing possible life in the universe, LC continues:

Quote:

Originally Posted by **Logical Christian** 

8. *Is it possible for there to be creatures that have formed we can not sense on earth with our 5 senses or with the technology we have developed?*

... *Bacteria was in existence for many years before it was discovered. Things like gamma rays existed too long long before its discovery. (Yes, this is not a 'life form' but an*

example of things existing before they were able to be 'seen'.)

One last question in this founding round.

9. If it's possible that you can't see, hear, touch, taste, feel or measure with current technology an item/creature/god that does exist – could it be that it is impossible for science to collect evidence of such an item/creature/god to prove it exists?

I would say yes. As technology and science knowledge increases, we discover more and more knowledge of new 'substances' and creatures and more. I have no doubt there is more to discover in the universe science currently knows nothing about.

I have previously discussed that this is no argument for anything but rather an attempt to link a specificity from the bible to an unknown unknown, while ignoring all other possible unknowns. Worse, the subject changes in those two points. In point 8, LC discusses that which is detectable and not detected yet. In point 9, LC adds "impossible" to the words for the first time, and reiterates this notion in their next post:

Quote:

Originally Posted by **Logical Christian** 

... I have only really determined it's possible for there to be other creatures in the universe, a god even, that are able to go undetected and so avoid scientific evidence gathering opportunities back up their existence.

No, that has not been established, nor even argued rather than tossed in at the end of a previous argument; a subject switch, even while having agreed to the epistemology I laid out. The argument which I accepted and to which LC agreed merely said there are unknown unknowns, not that they were rationally undetectable at all times, directly or by effect.

Quote:

So it is true, because we haven't evidence of 'item a' that does not mean 'item a' does not exist.

The entire absence of evidence for a god, having searched diligently is, by [modus tollens](#), evidence that there is no god. Asserting that a god is possible in relation to that which we know is a vanishingly improbable proposition of no greater weight than proposing that all gum trees are cleverly disguised cheese-eating ferrets.

To this point, LC continues to lay out a simple god of the gaps argument to the extent that LC is endeavouring to prise open a gap into which to insert an otherwise secret god. That is not in any respect an argument that it is more reasonable to believe in the christian god than not.

The fish analogy requires for its basis that there are dimensions inaccessible to us, in which a god might exist, that is that the fish never encounters either humans or their effects. If the fish sees dead bodies and ships coming down, fellow-fish being trawled up, then they might hypothesise the existence of *something* which does this. They may choose to send a fish exploratory party to shallower waters to gather evidence that this was done by things which do not naturally survive deep-sea immersion, an hypothesis they are capable of confirming. That is, the epistemological tools I discussed in my opening post are available and will serve to meet the analogy and negate its intent.

It is agreed that this debate is about more reasonable belief, and personal revelation is not relevant. Considering historical records, I discussed these issues when I talked about data by report in my OP. The same tools may be applied to such information to determine whether dragons exist, or [Baba-Yaga](#). Something better than ancient report, unable to be replicated or confirmed at that time or today after diligent searching, is needed to make a belief more reasonable than not, and [argumentum ad populum](#) does nothing to enhance the case in the absence of any other evidence or theoretical framework for such an entity.

LC now turns to the bible for evidence. Before I consider that, there is an error of argument which must be addressed.

Quote:

Originally Posted by **Logical Christian** [▶](#)

One of the major records of supposed eyewitness accounts with a god is the Bible.

But why the Bible and none of the other gods in alleged circulation?

First, The Bible is where my conclusion ends up, and I'm here to show how I came to such belief.*

Second, I'm not going to attempt to refute all the other claims of gods here as the topic is about the possibility of the Christian God.

And third, I know atheists don't believe in any of the other gods anyway, so no need to prove they don't exist. Instead I'm going to focus what makes me more than 50% sure the Biblical God is real.

* "ends up"? there is that circularity I mentioned.

The topic is that belief in the christian god is more reasonable than not. LC asserts above that there is no need to address alternative beliefs, yet if any alternative theism is equally probable, or many of them in sum equally probable as a whole, then the affirmative side of the debate fails. Any recourse to the bible as evidence must explain why this is overwhelmingly more cogent than recourse to the Qu'ran for support of Islam, or Russian Folk Tales for support of Baba-Yaga, and so on. All of these have supposed records, eyewitness support and common belief.

Quote:

Originally Posted by **Logical Christian** [▶](#)

... if the Biblical God exists as stated in the Bible, the Bible must be true. The two go hand in hand. You can't have Bible truth and no Biblical God, nor a Biblical God and no Bible truth.

Given that we have agreed over three posts that there is no evidence for any god, let alone the christian god, then this claim devolves to:

If the bible is true, therefore god.

If the bible is "true", please define true? Does it include literal and inerrant? If it does not, then on what basis is it regarded as "true". If any human interpretation were required then truth by god vanishes.

Also, I ask LC whether they agree with the following proposition:

if Krishna exists as stated in the Bhagavad Gita, the Bhagavad Gita must be true. The two go hand in hand. You can't have Bhagavad Gita truth and no Krishna, nor a Krishna and no Bhagavad Gita truth.

If LC disagrees with my statement, then why? How does LC's response apply to any other documented and popularly supported religion such that it is distinguished from corresponding reference to the bible and its god, without begging the question?

Quote:

Originally Posted by **Logical Christian** [▶](#)

Explaining ... why bad stuff isn't stopped by an all powerful all loving God, is provable but not this debates topic. ... If the Bible is true, God is by definition Love as it says. There are other logical and acceptable answers why we suffer.

If you propose that you have the answers to Epicurus' Problem of Evil, and to Euthyphro, then I am under great temptation to invite you to send them in, being quite at ease. Dealing with them will not take long. However, as you say, it is not the topic here. In any case, the contortions involved in trying and failing to deal with those questions would hardly offer support for a notion that belief in the christian god is more reasonable than not.

There are [still] no good arguments for gods.

Last edited by Xeno; 16th September 2012 at 02:45 PM. Reason: gender-free reference; redundancy



Logical Christian 
Junior Member

Join Date: Aug 2012
Posts: 16

 **It is more reasonable to believe in the Christian god than not - Xeno v LC**

Thanks for your thorough examination of my post, Xeno.

I do not profess to be the greatest wordsmith, and in the extreme hours of the day and shortness of time that I have to write, no doubt that doesn't help either. I don't claim any dispensation should head my way, I mention it merely to say your cross examination of every word I write, as a theologian might examine every word of the Bible, is a little frustrating, but I understand why you're doing it.

(And perhaps frustrating to you the inconsistency of my terminologies, sorry)

Detail is very important, essential actually, but in the time here I'm trying to be thorough but also quick at presenting the big picture of how you could possibly come to the difficult and somewhat unpopular conclusion of there being a Christian God.

Unless you are hit by a bright light and the voice of God Himself has a chat to you, this is something that takes a lot of thought, and many baby logical steps to find such a wonderful conclusion.

It's not something I've taken lightly, and I have no intentions of trickery or manipulation in this debate.

I'm not pre rehearsed or practised from years in a Christian forum, reading or participating in arguments with those of contrary opinions. It's just little me, sharing my logical steps to the conclusion of the debates topic.

Anyhow – enough self pity, I don't hear any violins playing so am pretty sure no one really cares



Let me try and respond quickly to some of your comments

Quote:

Originally Posted by **Xeno** 

Worse, the subject changes in those two points. In point 8, LC discusses that which is detectable and not detected yet. In point 9, LC adds "impossible" to the words for the first time, and reiterates this notion in their next post:

and

Quote:

Originally Posted by **Xeno** 

No, that has not been established, nor even argued rather than tossed in at the end of a previous argument; a subject switch, even while having agreed to the epistemology I laid out. The argument which I accepted and to which LC agreed merely said there are unknown unknowns, not that they were rationally undetectable at all times, directly or by effect.

Yeah, sloppy progression of steps on my part, sorry. This happened unintentional as I was trying to 'wrap things up' in this line of argument too quickly. I felt it was all probably starting to drag on for everyone – especially as it only opens possibility, nothing else.

Quote:

Originally Posted by **Xeno** 

The fish analogy requires for its basis that there are dimensions inaccessible to us, in which a god might exist, that is that the fish never encounters either humans or their effects. If the fish sees dead bodies and ships coming down, fellow-fish being trawled up, then they might hypothesise the existence of something which does this. They may choose to send a fish exploratory party to shallower waters to gather evidence that this

was done by things which do not naturally survive deep-sea immersion, an hypothesis they are capable of confirming. That is, the epistemological tools I discussed in my opening post are available and will serve to meet the analogy and negate its intent.

I would love to play with this analogy with you till the cows come home, but perhaps is somewhat pointless. My intentions were that the fish could not access the human frequented area of the world. I should have chosen some small creature stuck to the deepest darkest rock in the ocean that could not move. However to play with your extension of my analogy, the ocean is sooo large, the chance of a deep sea fish expedition seeing human existence in the time they could remain at such altitude in the middle of the pacific, is improbable. They could ask the sea turtles who could tell them, no doubt, then it's word of mouth again – my original intention of the analogy (oops, starting to get drawn in, maybe we could write a children's book together, alternating chapters? Moving on . . .)

Quote:

Originally Posted by **Xeno** [▶](#)
"ends up"? there is that circularity I mentioned.

Not a tall. I'm showing the path that took me to a conclusion, and not all the dead ends. The conclusion has no bearing on the initial search for the 'right' path, but now I found the 'right' path, I'm giving you a mud map to follow my steps. The only circle is going back to the beginning to show you.

Quote:

Originally Posted by **Xeno** [▶](#)
LC asserts above that there is no need to address alternative beliefs, yet if any alternative theism is equally probable, or many of them in sum equally probable as a whole, then the affirmative side of the debate fails. Any recourse to the bible as evidence must explain why this is overwhelmingly more cogent than recourse to the Qu'ran for support of Islam, or Russian Folk Tales for support of Baba-Yaga, and so on.

For want of a better example, this will do for now: If I were sharing how I came the number 1000 by adding two number together, I'm not going to bother listing all the other combinations of numbers that I found did not add up to 1000. It could be done, but not here in this brief encounter? Also pointless if you already know all the other incorrect combinations.

Quote:

Originally Posted by **Xeno** [▶](#)
If the bible is "true", please define true?

I'm sure this is a terminology I have/will swap around unintentionally. I mean credible, not made up, not lies, trustworthy, etc. What word should I use, or do you think I mean?

Quote:

Originally Posted by **Xeno** [▶](#)
*Also, I ask LC whether they agree with the following proposition:
if Krishna exists as stated in the Bhagavad Gita, the Bhagavad Gita must be true. The two go hand in hand. You can't have Bhagavad Gita truth and no Krishna, nor a Krishna and no Bhagavad Gita truth.*

It seems you could not have one with out the other – unless I'm missing the trick question? But like with the Bible, this argument does not prove anything (now that WOULD be circular). We need to prove at least one before the other can be claimed.

Quote:

Originally Posted by **Xeno** >

If you propose that you have the answers to Epicurus' Problem of Evil, and to Euthyphro, then I am under great temptation to invite you to send them in, being quite at ease. Dealing with them will not take long.

You assume you know my arguments which I doubt very much. I will PM it to you in the next few months when I get time to write it up properly for you.

Quote:

Originally Posted by **Xeno** >

In any case, the contortions involved in trying and failing to deal with those questions would hardly offer support for a notion that belief in the christian god is more reasonable than not.

And succeeding wouldn't prove the notion either, hence not spending the time here.

Better add some new content, eh . . .

The first most basic hurdle we need to clear to verify the Bible, and its eyewitness accounts, would be proving the historical existence of the people and places it mentions.

To be proven these need to be documented in other credible places outside the Bible, such as in independent historical documents or in archeological findings. If the Bible was inaccurate in its general facts about people and places, what credibility does it have with anything else?

While there's always been confirmations of some of the people and places the Bibles mentions, like a land called Egypt for example, the big gaps of lost cities and forgotten people that were only recorded in the Bible are only in the past couple of centuries finally been verified through archeology.

Much debate has previously been thrown at the historical accuracy of the Bible's references to places and people of history long past that had no verification –a major stumbling block to its credibility for many. For many years it has taken great faith to believe the people and places that were only recorded in the Bible could be true.

However, in the past couple of centuries, archeology has slowly silenced arguments, one by one, of the claims of Biblical people and places being fantasy, far less so the opposite.

Obviously, there'd be too many instances to list all the original accusations and their silencing discoveries, and to transcribe some of them to you satisfactorily here would take me too long and take up too much space. So with the modern marvels of the internet, here's a link to the infamous Wikipedia, a page that lists some such discoveries that have proven Biblical places and people, and links to their details etc etc for further verification.

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of...t_to_the_Bible

(And no, I don't hold Wikipedia to be the final say in any debate, but it's possibly the best peer managed place to start your own real research.)

So, to me, it seems the Bible is becoming more and more historically accurate the more we dig. This means if the places and people were actually there, then the Bible has enough credibility to warrant the next step of examination - the seemingly outrageous stories it tells around these people and places.

At this point, I'd like to also mention that while some argue the Bible has been changed or corrupted through time, making it far less credible, discoveries such as the Codex Sinaiticus , <http://codexsinaiticus.org/en/> , http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Codex_Sinaiticus and Dead Sea Scrolls, <http://dss.collections.imj.org.il> http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dead_sea Scrolls have started to verify the accuracy of the collection of books the Bible makes up.

Ok Ok , so essentially I've tried to show another relatively minor point in my logical progression to the conclusion of the title of this debate, still, like the possibility of god, the historical accuracy of the Bible are both something people need to grasp before continuing.

I also know you can have well researched books that are set in real places, naming real people and the events described be fiction. Indeed.

So while I've personally concluded there could be a god, and the Bible could be set with real characters and places, it's time to bring the two together to start seeing if the Bible's claims of a God are credible or fables. Time for some evidence.

18th September 2012, 08:25 PM

#7 



[Xeno](#) 

Plenty more where that one came from.

Join Date: May 2010
Location: Altitude 700 m
Posts: 9,997

Re: It is more reasonable to believe in the Christian god than not - Xeno v LC

Quote:

Originally Posted by [Logical Christian](#) 
Thanks for your thorough examination of my post, Xeno.

No problem, I am here to help. 😊

Quote:

If I were sharing how I came the number 1000 by adding two number together, I'm not going to bother listing all the other combinations of numbers that I found did not add up to 1000. ... Also pointless if you already know all the other incorrect combinations.

This evasion will not do. An analogy for the topic along your lines is that you are claiming that there is only a single way to combine numbers to reach an answer of 1000. If there is more than one way, your argument fails. This can not be evaded.

Quote:

Originally Posted by [Logical Christian](#) 

Quote:

Originally Posted by [Xeno](#) 
If the bible is "true", please define true? Does it include literal and inerrant? If it does not, then on what basis is it regarded as "true". If any human interpretation were required then truth by god vanishes.

I mean credible, not made up, not lies, trustworthy, etc. What word should I use, or do you think I mean?

Given LC did not refer to them, I take it that "literal" and "inerrant" are not included in the assessment of the credibility of the biblical text. It follows that credibility can not be lent to any report in that text unless there is meaningful independent confirmation of it. Currently, there is no more reason to lend it credibility than we might to the Bhagavad Gita, which at least offers some philosophical sense for the age in which it was developed rather than being a litany of slaughter and burning flesh for god's pleasure.

When the author of Timothy wrote (my emphasis)

Quote:

Originally Posted by **2 Timothy 3:16**
All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness.

we take it he was making it up. If he was not, then is the christian god incapable of inspiring accuracy or sense, or is the christian god also imperfect?

In several following quotations from LC I have substituted the words "Iliad" and "Greece" for "Bible" and other locations. My purpose is to illustrate that the quality of argument is completely unaffected by such substitutions. Given that LC selects the christian god, the burden lies on LC to demonstrate otherwise.

Quote:

The first most basic hurdle we need to clear to verify the Iliad, and its eyewitness accounts, would be proving the historical existence of the people and places it mentions.

To be proven these need to be documented in other credible places outside the Iliad, such as in independent historical documents or in archeological findings. If the Iliad was inaccurate in its general facts about people and places, what credibility does it have with anything else?

While there's always been confirmations of some of the people and places the Iliad mentions, like a land called Greece for example, the big gaps of lost [Trojan] cities and forgotten people that were only recorded in the Iliad are only in the past couple of centuries finally been verified through archeology.

Much debate has previously been thrown at the historical accuracy of the Iliad's references to places and people of history long past that had no verification –a major stumbling block to its credibility for many. For many years it has taken great faith to believe the people and places that were only recorded in the Iliad could be true.

However, in the past couple of centuries, archeology has slowly silenced arguments, one by one, of the claims of Trojan people and places being fantasy, far less so the opposite. ... So, to me, it seems the Iliad is becoming more and more historically accurate the more we dig. This means if the places and people were actually there, then the Iliad has enough credibility to warrant the next step of examination - the seemingly outrageous stories it tells around these people and places.

Similarly, there is no shortage of Greek artifacts, Greek documents dating from Greek times (rather than generations later) and records from other nations of the impact of the Greeks, not to mention the critical discovery of Troy.

If the thread of argument being pursued here by LC holds any credibility whatsoever, then on what basis does LC dismiss any Greek god mentioned in the Iliad? Historicity of the Greeks, the Trojans and of the Iliad itself appears more substantial than that of the bible, as I will discuss further later.

Quote:

At this point, I'd like to also mention that while some argue the Bible has been changed or corrupted through time, making it far less credible, discoveries such as the Codex Sinaiticus , <http://codexsinaiticus.org/en/> , http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Codex_Sinaiticus and Dead Sea Scrolls, <http://dss.collections.imj.org.il> http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dead_sea_scroll have started to verify the accuracy of the collection of books the Bible makes up.

This argument is not to the point. The question is not whether manuscripts exist of the material now considered to make up the bible, but whether those manuscripts are contemporaneous with or true reflections of the events they describe. At this point, the bible fails miserably. It is without meaningful historicity and in many particulars is recognisable nonsense.

Earlier, LC wrote of the bible that it was

Quote:

credible, not made up, not lies, trustworthy

One could spend considerable time on this but I shall try to be brief. Here are a few "credible, trustworthy" claims from the bible.

The earth was created in a certain order (Genesis 1).
The earth was created in a different order (Genesis 2).
All Egyptian livestock were killed by pestilence (Exodus 9:3-6)
Subsequently, the livestock (the great undead?) were smitten by hail (Exodus 9:18-25).
King Ahaziah was eighteen years younger than his father (2 Kings 8:26).
King Ahaziah was two years older than his father (2 Chronicles 22:2)
Judas kept the money from the priests, bought a field and his guts fell out (Acts 1:18)
Judas returned the money from the priests and hanged himself. The priests bought a field (Matthew 27:5)

This is but a small, random collection. One could go on for quite some time, for example, who was at the tomb first after the resurrection and where did Jesus go next? How do you breed stripey goats? How many legs does an insect have? After his conversion, did Paul go to the disciples or not, to Jerusalem or not?

These obvious absurdities and contradictions demonstrate that either the writer of Timothy was wrong or that God is rather error-prone. One recalls (doesn't one) that at the last supper, extensively reported in John, the following "conversation" took place (my emphasis):

[Simon Peter] "Lord, whither goest thou? Jesus answered him ..." (John 13:36)
[Thomas] "Lord, we know not whither thou goest" (John 14:5)
[Jesus] "... **and none of you asketh me, Whither goest thou?**" (John 16:5).

Is Jesus a bit of a dill or a very bad listener? It would certainly account for [the failure of prayer](#).

These examples are amusing and suffice to show that the Bible is not internally consistent. That being so, on what basis would any part of it *not externally corroborated* be trusted at all? In that, I speak only of ordinary facts. Are we further to take it for otherwise unverified supernatural claims?

At this point, any unsupported argument from the Bible is otiose. If support is derived from any Christian source, belief or framework then the argument is circular, a rather small circle in danger of fundamental disappearance.

However, let us look very briefly at the historicity of the Bible, aside from its internal inconsistencies. Is the Bible story credible, trustworthy, written as it is claimed, supported by external records? To quote an historian:

Quote:

Originally Posted by **1**
The historical saga contained in the Bible -- from Abraham's encounter with God and his journey to Canaan, to Moses' deliverance of the children of Israel from bondage, to the rise and fall of the kingdoms of Israel and Judah -- was not a miraculous revelation, but a brilliant product of the human imagination.

Finkelstein and Silberman show through basic archaeological information that:

- Nothing of the OT, at least to 500 BCE, was written contemporaneously with events.
- All of it has been revised.
- There are common authors
- Most of the Pentateuch (Genesis through Deuteronomy) is fabricated in the period 700 BCE or later, for political and *volk* purposes.
- No Abraham or Moses, no domesticated camels at that time, no Exodus, no famous cities.
- Most of the cities supposedly sacked did not exist at the time, having already been destroyed or abandoned.
- The peoples of Israel at the time of writing lived in a sparsely populated agrarian land dominated by the Assyrians (of whom much is made in the Bible, e.g. Lucifer, the Star of Babylon). The magnificent cities and broad domination of David and Solomon simply do not exist in the archaeological record *after excavation of relevant sites*.

It should be noted that Finkelstein and Silberman are neither the first to present this data nor are their views considered highly contentious outside the religious right. Indeed, much of the opposition comes from [those who say](#) Finkelstein and Silberman [over-state Bible historicity](#).

Non-historicity of the bible is not new. Searching on Wikipedia will find that critiques started a few hundred years into the Common Era and was firmed in the 18th to 20th centuries. I can provide references for that history if it is doubted.

As for the new testament, it is broadly accepted (ref 2, with others available) that no gospel was written before a generation after the supposed events, and not by the claimed authors nor by eye-witnesses. The gospels are heavily inconsistent between one another, and fairly clearly hold sectarian agendas. The canonical NT books were not finalised until 300 years later, the Codex Vaticanus and Codex Sinaiticus being examples of that finalisation. Prior to them, there are different codices, such as those of the Marionites who were contending with the Ebionites, Gnostics and proto-orthodox for religious supremacy within the christian church. Many of the non-anglo-catholic books and views remain in the Orthodox churches of Eastern Europe and the Anglicans and Catholics themselves hold differing views on acceptable books and doctrines.

Quote:

Time for some evidence.

Indeed, it is. It would make a change from wishful thinking, which looks to be my opponent's argument to this point.

References:

1. *The Bible Unearthed*, Finkelstein and Silberman, 2001
2. *Jesus, Interrupted*, Ehrman B D, 2009

There are [still] no good arguments for gods.

20th September 2012, 03:22 PM

#8 



[Logical Christian](#) 

Junior Member

Join Date: Aug 2012
Posts: 16

 **Re: It is more reasonable to believe in the Christian god than not - Xeno v LC**

Onward.

Quote:

Originally Posted by **Xeno** 
An analogy for the topic along your lines is that you are claiming that there is only a single way to combine numbers to reach an answer of 1000. If there is more than one way, your argument fails. This can not be evaded.

Ok. If I were sharing how I came up with the number 1009 by multiplying two numbers together, I'm not going to bother listing all the other combinations of numbers that I found did not equate to 1009.

Quote:

Originally Posted by **Xeno** 
is the christian god incapable of inspiring accuracy or sense, or is the christian god also imperfect?

Inspiration is very different to narration, perhaps what you're confusing inspiration to mean?

Here's some answers to your listed surface' contradictions. I say 'surface, because if you dig deeper you'll find answers. However most atheists no doubt would give a mere quick look at the list, if you're lucky a quick look at quoted verses of each one, but no further study, is probably all most atheists do with such lists, and take them as unsolvable. Let's look at some of your contradictory accusations of the Bible:

Quote:

Originally Posted by **Xeno** 

*The earth was created in a certain order (Genesis 1).
The earth was created in a different order (Genesis 2).*

Umm, no? While Gen 1 is a total, but concise, version of creation, Gen 2 is mostly re-looking with more detail at the human creation. As for a different order? Are you inferring animals were created after humans in Gen 2 instead of before, as in Gen 1? If so you need to re-look at Gen 2:19. It does not say the animals were 'then' created and brought to the man. Read and re-read, research if need be before concluding – especially if something doesn't make sense!

Quote:

Originally Posted by **Xeno** 

*All Egyptian livestock were killed by pestilence (Exodus 9:3-6)
Subsequently, the livestock (the great undead?) were smitten by hail (Exodus 9:18-25).*

You're misleading by saying 'all'. Read <http://bible.cc/exodus/9-3.htm> again. Not all livestock would have been killed the first time, nor the second in verses 18-25. Again, read and re-read, research if need be before concluding!

Quote:

Originally Posted by **Xeno** 

*King Ahaziah was eighteen years younger than his father (2 Kings 8:26)
King Ahaziah was two years older than his father (2 Chronicles 22:2)*

Probably genetically modified carrots caused him to age faster than his father . . . (sorry, not really!)

Ok, there's plenty of other scenarios and explanations people have suggested, like this <http://www.scribd.com/doc/15281186/H...d-2-Chronicles> or this <http://thebereans.net/contrar03.shtml>

Many seem plausible. Which one is right? I haven't spent that much time on it to decide.

Quote:

Originally Posted by **Xeno** 

*Judas kept the money from the priests, bought a field and his guts fell out (Acts 1:18)
Judas returned the money from the priests and hanged himself. The priests bought a field (Matthew 27:5)*

Once again you're misleading those who don't look up the text for themselves to start with.

<http://bible.cc/acts/1-18.htm> says "With the reward he got for his wickedness" (NIV) not "from the priests" as you specifically wrote. You're showing how easy it is to mislead by inaccurate Bible quoting, out of context quotes or non researched conclusions. How many readers looked up the text from your post? Unfortunately, I suspect most just read your interpretation as fact? Such twisting, intentional or not, or lack of research, not only forms atheist inaccurate opinions regarding the Bible but also is part of the cause we have so many different Christian denominations – people reading what they think, not looking what's actually there and finding the intent. (eg, hell)

Anyhow - while we could surmise how <http://bible.cc/john/12-6.htm> shows Judas financial 'reward from his wickedness' could also include his stealing of money, leaving him with other cash to buy a field, I suspect the Acts account is more the community gossip version of what happened and Mathew has the actual account. See if you can find the clues that can lead to this conclusion of the Acts version. They are there.

Quote:

Originally Posted by **Xeno** 

One recalls (doesn't one) that at the last supper, extensively reported in John, the following "conversation" took place (my emphasis):

[Simon Peter] "Lord, whither goest thou? Jesus answered him ..." (John 13:36)

[Thomas] "Lord, we know not whither thou goest" (John 14:5)

*[jesus] "... **and none of you asketh me, Whither goest thou?**" (John 16:5).*

Again, you've misled for impact, inferring that the third verse is still at the last supper, hinting the texts listed were mere minutes apart. They've moved on by the third John 16:5 text and much has been talked about in-between.

I'd advise you to read John chapter 13, 14, 15 and 16 together and get a well rounded feel of what's being said and the topics covered. In particular try and tap into the wave length of Jesus and the wave length of the disciples. Perhaps you'll be able to figure it out for yourself.

Quote:

Originally Posted by **Xeno** 

These obvious absurdities and contradictions demonstrate that either the writer of Timothy was wrong or that god is rather error-prone.

and

Quote:

Originally Posted by **Xeno** 

Is jesus a bit of a dill or a very bad listener?

My how the tides have turned (re my apparent ill conclusions earlier in the debate.) You're now not only claiming two different 'either' statements to the same 'contradiction', but with certainty you state such a very narrow selection of possible conclusions.

Quote:

Originally Posted by **Xeno** 

These examples are amusing and suffice to show that the bible is not internally consistent. That being so, on what basis would any part of it not externally corroborated be trusted at all?

Obviously I disagree and would say anyone who sees and believes your listed contradictions as being proof off error and does not openly and earnestly search for plausible explanations themselves has been easily fooled.

Moving on, my next focus comes to examining the Bible's prophecies. Prophecy is not only one of the most intriguing aspects of the Bible but also possibly the most significant way of verifying, or discrediting, the Bible. An unfulfilled prophecy (that has meant to have passed) is worse than a contradiction of someone's age, I think you'd agree.

Prophecies are easy to make, but having them come to fruition is impossible unless you have inside knowledge or get lucky with your perhaps educated, or vague guess.

The Bible makes many prophecies. Some clear and others hidden in an array of imagery that requires careful study to find the clues throughout the symbolism in the Bible to decipher.

I think examining the outcomes of prophecies in religious texts is the greatest way of proving, or disproving, them. If a prophecy is made by a god, or a person who has god speaking 'through' them, then if that prophecy does not come to pass as described then the god involved is somewhat inadequate to call themselves a god.

On the contrary, if prophecy is fulfilled it's a wonderful way to look back and confirm there was a god who did know the future. Sometimes prophecies are warnings ahead of time, but others are merely to confirm there is someone who knows the future and that what's happening around you will be all ok by the end.

One is the prophecy was hidden in a dream of Nebuchadnezzar.

It's found in Daniel 2. Many will be familiar with it - the dream about the statue that represents world powers.

Perhaps you can research yourself as to the historical accuracy of this prophecy, and even find verification that it wasn't written after the events - that is if you look further than just the skeptics take on it.

The prophecy and historically proved fruition is as follows:

1. **Head of gold** - Babylon, which ruled the world 612-539 B.C. as one of the mightiest empires, fittingly the head and made of gold.
2. **Chest and arms of silver** - Medo-Persia, the ruling world power from 539-331 B.C., inferior to Babylon, just as silver is inferior to gold. Led by Cyrus they conquered Babylon and demolished it (and as prophesied in Isaiah 13:19-20, it has never been rebuilt).
3. **Belly and thighs of bronze** - Hellenistic Greece, 331 B.C. until about 168 B.C., Alexander the Great conquering the Medes and Persians at the battle of Arbela.
4. **Legs of iron** - Rome, reigned from 168 B.C. until it was captured by the Ostrogoths in A.D. 476.
5. **Feet partly of iron and partly of clay** - The divided Roman Empire, A.D. 476 till today. When the Roman Empire crumbled barbarian tribes divided it. Ten of these tribes evolved into modern Europe, seven of them still exist in Europe: the Anglo-Saxons > English, the Franks > French, the Alemanni > Germans, and the Lombards > Italians. Though many have attempted to reunite the European continent, none have ever succeeded as this prophecy suggests in the Bible.

Another prophecy, or set of prophecies actually, are those that predict the (first) coming and events in Jesus' time on earth.

I looked around for a collection of these to link to and found this collection/summary:

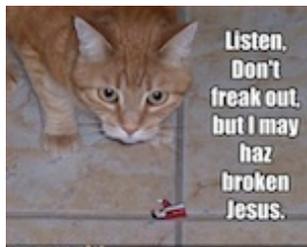
<http://www.askapastor.org/proph.html>

Was it just coincidence, impossible. Were they written after the event, no. Did Jesus go out of his way to fulfill them all, couldn't as they weren't all in his control.

So while Jesus appeared to have fulfilled the prophecies, there's little point in believing such claims if it's all only in the Bible. It would be circular to only say the Bible predicts and the Bible proves, end of story. However there is outside documentation of Jesus' existence and accounts of what happened that can verify some of what the Bible presents. To kick you off in research, see http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Historicity_of_Jesus and even this guy is very keen, shall we say lol! http://www.pleaseconvinceme.com/inde...side_the_Bible

Gotta wrap up the post.

So far as I read it, there is not one word in the Gospels saying one needs to be intelligent to figure out God loves them. -LC



Xeno 

Plenty more where that one came from.

Join Date: May 2010
Location: Altitude 700 m
Posts: 9,997

Re: It is more reasonable to believe in the Christian god than not - Xeno v LC

Quote:

Originally Posted by **Logical Christian** 
OK. If I were sharing how I came up with the number 1009 ...

LC continues to miss the point to the level of active avoidance of it. This is unsurprising given this is but one area where LC is unable to sustain the affirmative case.

There is of course an infinite number of ways of multiplying two rational numbers with the answer 1009, and that is in only one of the possible number bases. I do not expect rejection of an infinite number of alternatives except on a common principle. One of the burdens on the affirmative side in this debate is to show that where there are two or more similar explanations with different conclusions then to call one special over the other requires reason and supporting data, that the common principle applicable to other myths does not apply to LC's preferred myth. We have considered the basis of reason in my [opening statement](#). The arguments by LC offer no more *basis for belief* in the validity of the biblical account than they do in any number of other myths, of which I have mentioned examples such as the Bhagavad Gita or the Iliad.

Quote:

Inspiration is very different to narration...

Perhaps LC could explain what inspiration means to them? It would be attractive if it were to result in something which is...

Quote:

Originally Posted by **Logical Christian** 
... credible, not made up, not lies, trustworthy, etc.

In the same post referenced there, LC made the true claim that archaeology had unearthed cities mentioned in the bible, as they have done for Troy and Viking longships also. However, that myths are written around real places or even real characters does not make such myths true. In their entire [post #8](#) LC has not demurred from, not even mentioned, the historical evidence that most of the Old Testament and much of the NT are historical fabrications, for which I provided references in my previous post and which can be found in any event on LC's preferred Wikipedia, for example [1](#) [2](#) [3](#) [4](#). The Jews of the mythical period of the OT were polytheists, as I shall further explain.

When discussing a selection of the bible contradictions and errors I raised previously, LC uses words like

Quote:

[not] unsolvable ... all [does not mean 'all'] ... scenarios and explanations ... Many seem plausible ... we could surmise ... see if you can find ... tap into the wavelength ... openly and earnestly search for plausible explanations

Plausible? *Find* explanations? Tap into the wavelength? The purpose of this debate is to present a case that belief in the christian god is more reasonable than not. No case is advanced by saying "assume (whichever) god then see whether you can make up stories not in the text to account for the evident absurdities." Exactly the same fallacy of [special pleading](#), known more technically as making shit up, equally justifies any other god of any other mythology or religion, quite apart

from being a logical fallacy in itself.

I would be delighted if readers would look up the relevant bible passages for themselves. Many more contradictions may be found here: [1](#) [2](#) [3](#).

One could pause over the special pleading by LC, where a clear demarcation of days becomes an elaboration, where "all" does not mean that when god says it, where Judas suddenly has novel and unmentioned sources of criminal income, Jesus has been getting into the *water* over a long dinner and for Ahaziah the sudden introduction of a huge backstory involving seduction, crime, a woman marrying her stepson who adopts his older sibling as his son with the sibling "ruling" without a kingdom for twenty years before he moves to rule in a named place. I missed a few wrinkles there. The interesting point is that in LC's [proffered reference](#) there appear the words:

Quote:

Originally Posted by **scribd**

Since there would be severe consequences to our faith should there indeed be proven as much as a single error in our Bible

Was not my previous query skipped over by LC, about whether the bible was inerrant? Is it now necessary to invent such a gallimaufry rather than saying "someone was less than inspired at that moment"?

For the crucial point is that I was merely pointing out fairly obvious inconsistencies in the broadly recognised myths created as the Jewish tribes turned from animism and polytheism toward monotheism around the 6th century BCE, and were inventing their myths about it. [Monotheism](#) was a nifty idea already trialled by an Egyptian Pharaoh, the Babylonians and Zoroastrians so well enough known to the Jews, and their legal code was readily adapted from the much earlier Hammurabi and from the Assyrians under whom they lived. I was not in any respect assuming truth of the contradictory myths, but if inerrancy is being claimed then it seems we must also discard some of our most successful theories such as that of evolution. We may be about to be told that the earth stopped rotating, and also had a magic flood. Is that so, LC?

In passing, I note that LC quoted a portion of my text but omitted from it and did not comment upon my reference to a scientific research demonstrating that prayer is ineffective, and may even be deleterious for patients if they are aware of prayer.

There is no evidence at all for the god LC wishes us to think more reasonable than not, while background games continue, to make the unsupported and the absurd sound vaguely plausible if only you invent enough new "facts". I can play too. Using the same techniques of special pleading and invention, Star Wars is inerrant, and if LC supports those same fallacious techniques then it can not be demonstrated otherwise.

Factually, the bible contains no unique knowledge, only commonplace understandings of the era (at least, those of desert tribes rather than the greater knowledge of more advanced civilisations) and a wealth of errors.

My opponent wonders how a prophecy might be made true. There are two steps involved. One is to write the story to fit the prophecy, for which practice there is ample evidence in the bible (the Ehrman work previously cited has examples) and the other is deploying the techniques we have seen above, special pleading, convenient reinterpretation, selection and simply making shit up. The gospel and other writers a generation after a Jesus character lived knew their scriptures very well. It is important to make your story consistent with what people already know if you are going to sell the product.

In my experience those loving messianic prophecy seem fond of Micah 5:1-2, even though the prior existence of these verses made it necessary for the only two gospel writers who described Jesus' birth to make up different stories to place the birth in Bethlehem for a character from Nazareth (the latter being the only place referenced by the writer of Mark). I need hardly go into the birth and travel discrepancies. Readers will find them in Ehrman or at web sites I have linked from this post. However, I wonder, what happens if we keep reading in Micah chapter 5? When did Jesus "waste the land of Assyria with the sword", aided by seven shepherds and eight principal men? Is this a plan for the second coming? Finding the shepherds and agreeing the current borders of Assyria might be a bit tricky. Please, read [Micah 5](#).

It should be self-evident that stories are made up about Daniel's "prophecies". A simple indication is the labelling of civilisations. Why is the Greek civilisation "bronze" for example, and the Roman "iron". The Greek bronze age was the Mycenaean (also the time of Troy) a thousand years before. The Greeks in the centuries immediately BCE used iron, or they would have lost all of their battles! The iron age had started about 600 years before the Daniel "prophecy" so iron was well known. It would be rather more impressive had the bible mentioned titanium, but don't mention that to god because he already has a problem with iron.

Quote:

Originally Posted by **Judges 1:19**

And the LORD was with Judah; and he drove out the inhabitants of the mountain; but could not drive out the inhabitants of the valley, because they had chariots of iron

There is nothing new or interesting in the bible, just the same old myths and slaveries. Christianity is one of the few religions today which continues to support human sacrifice, scapegoating, as a core component of its belief. This is not evidence for a god.

Quote:

Originally Posted by **LC**

So far as I read it, there is not one word in the Gospels saying one needs to be intelligent to figure out God loves them.-LC

I wonder whether my opponent notices the rich irony in that?

There are [still] no good arguments for gods.

23rd September 2012, 11:30 PM

#10 



[Logical Christian](#) 

Junior Member

Join Date: Aug 2012
Posts: 16

 **Re: It is more reasonable to believe in the Christian god than not - Xeno v LC**

It pains me to have little time to respond in full to all of Xenos commentary. I'll do my best to zip through a few glaring issues raised.

Quote:

Originally Posted by **Xeno** 

One of the burdens on the affirmative side in this debate is to show that where there are two or more similar explanations with different conclusions then to call one special over the other requires reason and supporting data, that the common principle applicable to other myths does not apply to LC's preferred myth.

I'm sure I have presented a very unorthodox debate. Apologies for not fitting the mold. You're welcome to discredit all other popular 'possibilities'.

Quote:

Originally Posted by **Xeno** 

Perhaps LC could explain what inspiration means to them?

The text you quoted, 2 Timothy 3:16 talks about this 'inspiration', as does 2 Peter 1:20-21 Also, Luke 1:1-4 certainly shows the Bible is not narrated. Perhaps the simplest, though loosest, explanation would be that inspiration is God leading the author to deliver key messages. So perhaps you could take this to mean there could be 'trivial' discrepancies on human account, but all key messages are in harmony as desired by God.

Quote:

Originally Posted by **Xeno** 

When discussing a selection of the bible contradictions and errors I raised previously, LC uses words like Plausible? Find explanations? Tap into the wavelength? The purpose of this debate is to present a case that belief in the christian god is more reasonable than not. No case is advanced by saying "assume (whichever) god then see whether you can make up stories not in the text to account for the evident absurdities." Exactly the same fallacy of [special pleading](#), known more technically as making shit up, equally justifies any other god of any other mythology or religion, quite apart from being a logical fallacy in itself.

If this is your mind set, that you must take every English translated word of the Bible without any thought given to translation, historical context, metaphoric context, author background, 'character' background/context etc etc, I understand how you've come to your shallow conclusions that all such contradictions are as sure as the Big Bang. I gave you some hints on where to find real solutions to you listed contradictions – except for one, which I haven't looked into personally with any effort.

Quote:

Originally Posted by **Xeno** 

I would be delighted if readers would look up the relevant bible passages for themselves. Many more contradictions may be found here: [1](#) [2](#) [3](#).

And likewise, there's explanations may more of these contradictions to those who are genuinely interested in real answers.

Quote:

Originally Posted by **Xeno** 

One could pause over the special pleading by LC, where a clear demarcation of days becomes an elaboration, where "all" does not mean that when god says it,

All "where"? All over the world, all that are in the Courtyard . . . you're missing it.

Quote:

Originally Posted by **Xeno** 

where Judas suddenly has novel and unmentioned sources of criminal income,

Unmentioned ???? You did read this text I posted? <http://bible.cc/john/12-6.htm>

Quote:

Originally Posted by **Xeno** 

Jesus has been getting into the water over a long dinner

Context, context, context!

Quote:

Originally Posted by **Xeno** 

and for Ahaziah the sudden introduction of a huge backstory involving seduction, crime, a woman marrying her stepson who adopts his older sibling as his son with the sibling "ruling" without a kingdom for twenty years before he moves to rule in a named place.

LOL, You can have this one. I haven't looked into this 'monumental' contradiction over a kings age with any gusto, just posted some other's ideas to get you thinking.

Quote:

Originally Posted by **Xeno** 
Was not my previous query skipped over by LC, about whether the bible was inerrant?

Indeed I did miss replying to this. Apologies. In the definition of inspiration, and the process of translation, I would say there would be some trivial errors, yeah, but key message errors, no.

Quote:

Originally Posted by **Xeno** 
We may be about to be told that the earth stopped rotating, and also had a magic flood. Is that so, LC?

If there is no God as described in the Bible, nope, none of this happened.

Quote:

Originally Posted by **Xeno** 
In passing, I note that LC quoted a portion of my text but omitted from it and did not comment upon my reference to a scientific research demonstrating that prayer is ineffective, and may even be deleterious for patients if they are aware of prayer.

I thought this to be a bit of a throw away line/dig, but apparently not. You linked to an almost rock solid scientific experiment except for one critical point: it was not, and could never be a total blind experiment. Think about it. The only valid results were those without prayer and those thinking people were praying for them but went.

Quote:

Originally Posted by **Xeno** 
There is no evidence at all for the god LC wishes us to think more reasonable than not, while background games continue, to make the unsupported and the absurd sound vaguely plausible if only you invent enough new "facts".

Forgive me, quote me what facts have I made up? I do not mean to make up anything except analogies that cannot seem be understood the purpose I made them up. I will gladly take back anything I have made up as fact.

Quote:

Originally Posted by **Xeno** 
However, I wonder, what happens if we keep reading in Micah chapter 5? When did Jesus "waste the land of Assyria with the sword", aided by seven shepherds and eight principal men? Is this a plan for the second coming? Finding the shepherds and agreeing the current borders of Assyria might be a bit tricky. Please, read [Micah 5](#).

Read. Perhaps the question you need to figure out is who do the Assyrians represent in the prophecy? Is it a literal Assyria in a 'soon' future (now passed), or a representational Assyria for a 'second coming' future (not yet passed), or both? More study, eh!?

Quote:

Originally Posted by **Xeno** 
It should be self-evident that stories are made up about Daniel's "prophecies". A simple indication is the labelling of civilisations. Why is the Greek civilisation "bronze" for example, and the Roman "iron". The Greek bronze age was the Mycenaean (also the time of Troy) a thousand years before. The Greeks in the centuries immediately BCE used iron, or they would have lost all of their battles!

Good effort in your study on this one so far. Some say Greek soldiers were called "brazen coated" because their armor was all bronze. Linking the civilisation with the metal based on 'usage' is a good start. Also notice, however, how each mineral in the statue is less valuable, but more lasting than the previous mineral? So the iron legs suggest strength superior to previous empires—as iron is stronger than the rest—but with diminished 'culture', if you like.

Quote:

Originally Posted by **Xeno** [▶](#)
Christianity is one of the few religions today which continues to support human sacrifice, scapegoating, as a core component of its belief.

OK??? Enlighten me on this one? Surely you're deviously loosely referring to the belief that Jesus, as the son of God, offered to become human and die so humans don't have to face eternal death if they choose to accept that offer of reprieve?

My time is up, I have to submit.

I'm disappointed I got nothing added except sweeping up Xeno's statements this time.

Love to you all.

LC

24th September 2012, 12:01 AM

#11 



Protium 

...
Administrator

Join Date: Dec 2008
Location: Perth Western Australia
Posts: 13,062

 **Re: It is more reasonable to believe in the Christian god than not - Xeno v LC**

Quote:

Originally Posted by **Logical Christian** [▶](#)
I'm disappointed I got nothing added except sweeping up Xeno's statements this time.

Love to you all.

LC

This is your 4th statement. There is Xeno's reply, your 5th statement followed by Xeno's reply and then closing statements to follow.

Are you conceding the debate?

If not I apologise for the inference, it's just how I read this.

·
·
·

Faith is not a virtue... it is a servile weakness, it is a refuge in cowardice, and it is a willingness to follow with credulity people who are, in the highest degree, unscrupulous. - Christopher Hitchens

24th September 2012, 07:22 PM

#12 

Join Date: Aug 2012
Posts: 16



Logical Christian

Junior Member

Re: It is more reasonable to believe in the Christian god than not - Xeno v LC

Hi Protium

I still have new content to add, I was just ran out of time this round and didn't get to add any new arguments of my own - I spent my little time with responses in my 4th post and needed to post before I timed out.

I have a window in a couple of days time to write my final statement, then the closing afterwards. Confirming, I am not conceding. Thanks for checking.

LC

 24th September 2012, 08:08 PM

#13 



Protium 

...
Administrator

Join Date: Dec 2008
Location: Perth Western Australia
Posts: 13,062

Re: It is more reasonable to believe in the Christian god than not - Xeno v LC

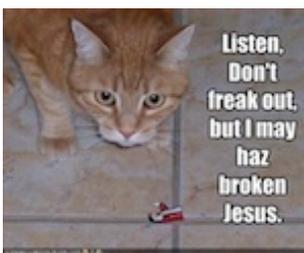
OK.. Thanks for clarifying.

I was worried there for a minute 😊

Faith is not a virtue... it is a servile weakness, it is a refuge in cowardice, and it is a willingness to follow with credulity people who are, in the highest degree, unscrupulous. - Christopher Hitchens

 25th September 2012, 09:40 AM

#14 



Xeno 

Plenty more where that one came from.

Join Date: May 2010
Location: Altitude 700 m
Posts: 9,997

Re: It is more reasonable to believe in the Christian god than not - Xeno v LC

At this point in the debate my opponent is bringing no new data to the table, no arguments for their case, but fisking ineffectually at the obvious problems I have raised with their attempts to rely upon the bible as showing evidence for the christian god. I shall briefly review those problems of argument then continue with some additional research which shows that claims for the christian god are falsified whenever we seek to measure the supposed effects and presumptions for that god and that religion. Given my opponent has only one more post before the closing statements, it is proper that any novel material I introduce, rather than material in direct rebuttal, be delivered while LC still has time to answer it.

Hiding behind a self-styled "unorthodox" approach, LC is unable to offer any distinction between the bible myth and alternative myths, although through hints LC suggests that concomitant with accepting his argument goes belief in utter magic. The problems with The Flood, for example, are innumerable, a partial list including more water than is on the planet, an energy exchange which

would destroy the planet, non-mixing of salt and fresh water so species can survive, the absurdity of the ark itself, olive trees living a year under water, the logistics of food and shit and on it goes. *Whether or not* you decide the flood and its ark story come under "key messages" then, looking at the implications of your decision, on what basis is any part of the bible to be believed? In saying this I have already pointed out in my [post #7](#) evidence that all of the early OT books are recognised to have been made up in any case. My opponent has not denied this, nor that The Iliad is better supported historically so by LC's own argument then the Greek pantheon is true, not to mention the Hindu, Norse and all the rest for they all rely on LC's form of arguments.

When LC asks me

Quote:

Forgive me, quote me what facts I have made up?

I refer them to explanations of biblical contradictions, all of which involve creating a back story, reinterpreting for convenience, even deciding that the word Assyrians, the people controlling Judea at the time the words were written, is not a reference to Assyrians: therefore, prophecy is true. On this same basis, would you like the *real* story of Little Miss Muffet, the banana and the piece of string? We still don't know what Jesus is going to do with that sword and those probably quite bemused shepherds he digs up. It seems "genuine" explanations involve making it up as you go along to fit the story you first thought. This has nothing at all to do with principles of reason discussed in my opening statement and accepted by LC at the time. No logic or reason is being applied by LC, only wishful thinking and assertions from belief.

LC also asked:

Quote:

Originally Posted by **LC**

Quote:

Originally Posted by **Xeno**

Christianity is one of the few religions today which continues to support human sacrifice, scapegoating, as a core component of its belief.

OK??? Enlighten me on this one? Surely you're deviously loosely referring to the belief that Jesus ... offered to become human and die ...

Far from deviously, I refer directly to the holding of that belief in the validity of human sacrifice and the theory of scapegoating. Throughout the OT (made up as it is, but it is that on which LC relies) it is repeated that the god loves a good bit of sacrificial burning flesh and always feels better for it. Genesis 8:19-21 is one of many examples (you might notice in it that Noah was busily burning the animals he was supposed to have saved, by the way). This is reiterated in the NT in Ephesians 5:2 (my emphasis)

Quote:

Originally Posted by **bible, KJV**

*And walk in love, as Christ also hath loved us, and hath given himself for us **an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet smelling savour.***

Mmm, [scapegoat theory](#) redolent of sacrifice and burning flesh, commonplace in ancient myths and religions but now abandoned in most of them and certainly not an accepted part of current society and law. It is where belief in the Christian God still sits, but it is hardly evidence for a God.

If there is the Christian God then claims follow from that. One I have already touched on is the efficacy of prayer. LC's claim

Quote:

The only valid results were those without prayer and those thinking people were praying for them but weren't

There is zero basis for this claim. The knowledge of whether or not there was prayer was assigned randomly as was prayer itself, both consistent with a double-blind experiment. The factual

outcome in the "uncertain" group is that prayer had no effect at all. Independently, prayer together with certainty of receiving it was associated with poorer outcomes. "Knowledge" was a treatment in the design of the experiment and, as LC almost says, it is a sound scientific experiment, no caveats.

Given LC said in their early posts that they were committed to reason it is fortunate for LC that there is additional research on these matters of belief and christian assumptions.

The question of interpretation of the bible, of what god was or is thinking, was addressed by Epley et al in [Believers' estimates of God's beliefs are more egocentric than estimates of other people's beliefs](#). Quite simply, this study shows that god is said by adherents to believe whatever the individual believer thinks god believes. Further, when the individual changes their mind, so does their god, unlike that same individual's estimations of any other person's beliefs. This is how believers know how to interpret of the bible. As well as making up facts for the bible, they make up the interpretations as well, the perfect subjectivism with the objective being supposed personal welfare after death.

If the christian god were true, the reason we need human/godly sacrifice is (leaving aside most of the rational absurdities) original sin, natural badness. This implies that people will intuitively make selfish (pseudo-darwinist) decisions, and god-adherence ought, one might think, enable christian believers to make better moral decisions, indeed that morality post-dates religion rather than religion being a by-product of human pattern-creation. The first pertinent study on this topic is from Rand et al, [Spontaneous giving and calculated greed](#) wherein it is shown that generosity and co-operation are intuitive whereas contrary self-interest requires thought. A more accessible description of the study is provided [here](#). This is opposite to the biblical presumption, showing again that the bible and god-belief have no reflection in reality.

Pyysiainen and Hauser show in their study, [The origins of religion : evolved adaptation or by-product](#) that religiosity does not improve moral decisions.

Quote:

Originally Posted by **Pyysiainen & Hauser, summary**
Specifically, despite differences in religious background, individuals show no difference in the pattern of their moral judgments for unfamiliar moral scenarios.

The paper shows further that religion is "a by-product of existing mechanisms for understanding agent intentions", albeit that religion itself may then be adopted as a cognitively inexpensive method of processing moral ideas, systematising behaviours in separated but otherwise common groups. It is our promiscuous teleology, as they aptly put it, which adds the god-layer and leaves god-believers apt to think their moral basis threatened by atheism because they are *habituated* to religion being used to conceptualise moral decisions. Research and history show that moral decisions are made by humans, no gods involved other than to be invoked to support killing non-believers in that particular instance of a god.

The christian alternative to this is based on a crude estimate of a civilising process, that power is needed to compel good. This is simply not supported in the literature, any more than any god is supported by its related mythical work, let along the christian god by a fabricated and redacted bible which still can not hide its inherent absurdities or moral turpitude.

There are [still] no good arguments for gods.

Last edited by Xeno; 25th September 2012 at 09:47 AM. Reason: added the last phrase to end of 2nd last paragraph.

27th September 2012, 09:21 PM

#15 



[Logical Christian](#) 
Junior Member

Join Date: Aug 2012
Posts: 16

 **It is more reasonable to believe in the Christian god than not - Xeno v LC**

Quote:

Originally Posted by **Xeno** 

At this point in the debate my opponent is bringing no new data to the table, no arguments for their case, but fisking ineffectually at the obvious problems I have raised with their attempts to rely upon the bible as showing evidence for the christian god.

I mentioned why the lack of new data and spent my time replying to your lack of study towards seeing the logical solutions to the problems you claim.

Quote:

Originally Posted by **Xeno** 

The problems with The Flood, for example, are innumerable,

As with evolution, but go on, to late for this debate!

Quote:

Originally Posted by **Xeno** 

Whether or not you decide the flood and its ark story come under "key messages" then, looking at the implications of your decision, on what basis is any part of the bible to be believed?

The flood is part of an important key message, yes. There's plenty of evidence around for there having been a global flood in my research also. But we haven't time to get bogged down on this topic now.

For answers to your confusion on how the flood could ever have happened as it is written, the Answers in Genesis people have more data than you'll ever choose to believe.

<http://www.answersingenesis.org/get-...eology-fossils>

Quote:

Originally Posted by **Xeno** 

---Quote---

Forgive me, quote me what facts I have made up?

---End Quote---

I refer them to explanations of biblical contradictions, all of which involve creating a back story, reinterpreting for convenience, even deciding that the word Assyrians, the people controlling Judea at the time the words were written, is not a reference to Assyrians: therefore, prophecy is true.

You're underestimating the Bible as and overestimating your own sureness. I'm sorry you can not see what the Bible says with your mindset. There's no point in arguing further while you keep making accusations, without actually stoping to research.

If we're both so sure in our research, let's hope you're right, hey!

Quote:

Originally Posted by **Xeno** 

I refer directly to the holding of that belief in the validity of human sacrifice and the theory of scapegoating. Throughout the OT (made up as it is, but it is that on which LC relies) it is repeated that the god loves a good bit of sacrificial burning flesh and always feels better for it.

You're continuing to show a lack in research of the Bible. Please reference all the humans that were sacrificed in the intention of atonement from sin at Gods' request – as you're inferring? I count one – the Son of God – Jesus. Those other 'clean' animals were all pointing forward to this one sacrifice and once it happened, that practice became redundant.

More study, less preconceived conclusions, will help you reconcile your issues with the Bible.

Quote:

Originally Posted by **Xeno** >

Genesis 8:19-21 is one of many examples (you might notice in it that Noah was busily burning the animals he was supposed to have saved, by the way).

Wrong again, by the way.

The Bible says **Gen. 7:2** seven of each 'clean' animal entered the ark, and it was the seventh that was sacrificed after exiting the ark, which would leave 3 pairs to chum up together.

Quote:

Originally Posted by **Xeno** >

The knowledge of whether or not there was prayer was assigned randomly as was prayer itself, both consistent with a double-blind experiment. The factual outcome in the "uncertain" group is that prayer had no effect at all. Independently, prayer together with certainty of receiving it was associated with poorer outcomes. "Knowledge" was a treatment in the design of the experiment and, as LC almost says, it is a sound scientific experiment, no caveats.

You've missed the point again!

Was the test assuming there could be a god?

If not, why do the test and conclude there is no god, if so, then you also assume the god knows about the test and what you're trying to prove. You need a triple blind experiment where you can fool a god for this test to be all conclusive.

Quote:

Originally Posted by **Xeno** >

If the christian god were true, the reason we need human/godly sacrifice is (leaving aside most of the rational absurdities) original sin, natural badness. This implies that people will intuitively make selfish (pseudo-darwinist) decisions,

The Bible is all about this topic. The reason 'sin' came and the universal solution for it. And we need no more sacrifices, by the way. It's been dealt with, the ledger is reconciled already. It's all through the book.

Quote:

Originally Posted by **Xeno** >

and god-adherence ought, one might think, enable christian believers to make better moral decisions,

You know, if people did follow the Bible's rules as summarised in Matthew 22:36-40 then yes, we would live in an amazing world of morality. But Christians are human, and our nature involves some selfishness of varying levels from person to person. It isn't going to happen and we acknowledge that.

Quote:

Originally Posted by **Xeno** >

Pyysiainen and Hauser show in their study, The origins of religion : evolved adaptation or by-product that religiosity does not improve moral decisions.

First, I love the irony of being lectured on morals by an atheist. How did morals evolve exactly? Was there a global council that decided survival of the fittest is no longer the creed of all living things, lets get along now? What evidence do you have for morals evolving - of just hypothesis?

However in answer to this statement, atheists, Christians, and other religious groups, are all as good and bad as each other. I don't see myself as morally better than you Xeno. If you see a 3 month old left alone on the side of the road and you're a little poor, like me you're not going to eat it in the name of 'survival' and saving money for future food, you'll help the child.

Anyhow, some final new 'data' to finish with.

While I have not touched on my findings that have lead me to doubt the other major religions and even evolution's evolving theory, I would like to spend the last part of my post on the argument that is most convincing to me, yet no doubt most controversial.

My personal experience. This is something you can not verify nor dispute. It is unfortunately outside science's capabilities once again to prove or disprove.

The effect on my life from both following the Bible's guidelines (no, not the expired old ceremonial laws) and answers to personal prayer I have received and witnessing for those around me, for important, yet outrageously improbable, outcomes, is nothing short of astounding.

It is here where my path of research has ultimately ended up.

First, let me explain how I made this final jump to prayer in my claimed logical path to believing the Biblical God is more probable than not?

After my most recent step of research convincing me Bible prophecy was most probably real, it brought a conclusion that there was someone who knows the future involved, God in this case. It was time to give it a sincere try ad see if it is the real deal.

Here's the prayer.

"God of the Bible, if you're real, I sincerely want to become convinced. Help me to find you if you're real. "

Now years down the track, here I am convinced.

Let me focus on prayer for a bit.

Prayer is not something you can experiment with. God is onto sceptic's games with prayer. It's not something he performs as if in a circus. "I'd better answer or they'll say bad things about me." kind of stuff.

It's also not something you can simply ask anything you want, and get it. It's a needs to get basis.

Like a child's thoughts of what they 'need', we often think we need something but may not in actuality.

What effects prayers 'success' most is intentions and needs and principles.

Are you sincere? Do you really need it or are you asking for the right thing? Is it in harmony with the Bible's/God's teachings?

I also understand how people can fall for thinking prayers were answered, when they weren't at all.

For example,

I understand :

- pray enough, and you'll get a coincidence sooner or later.
- pray vague enough and you'll get a coincidence sooner or later.
- be creative enough and you'll see an answer
- pray for certainty (or even probability) and you'll most likely see it happen.

I am wise to such ill conclusions. My answered prayers that have built my faith in the Christian God all fall outside all these pseudo prayer answer possibilities.

I have prayed for 'signs' to lead me in what I should do when faced with what I deemed important decisions. Prayed for finding lost items of importance in times of importance. I've even prayed and used the 'open the Bible and read a text' method of getting an answer of specific obscure

words to be in the text turned to. It's really happened to me, over and over!

If it were something that would convince you I'd happily go into full details of such prayers and answers, but who here would believe me anyway?

You gotta experience it for yourself.

For me, numerous answers to prayer has overwhelmingly confirmed any skepticism I had left in a Christian God.

After this more study has revealed this God to be one of Love, not the eternal torturing savage made out by some Atheists, and even some Christians!

I understand that my statements are most likely not believable to you. And they shouldn't be on their own without your own open minded investigation.

I have listed (perhaps poorly) my step by step researched conclusions, and what has finally won me over to believing it is more reasonable to believe in the Christian God than not.

Thanks for your invitation to this discussion, Xeno.

Closing statement to come shortly.

Logical Christian. 😊

28th September 2012, 03:10 PM

#16 



[Xeno](#) 

Plenty more where that one came from.

Join Date: May 2010
Location: Altitude 700 m
Posts: 9,997

Re: It is more reasonable to believe in the Christian god than not - Xeno v LC

I appreciate that my opponent has sought to avoid a circular argument, even though that is where they have finished. LC stated in an early post that god implies bible truth and bible truth implies god. Recognising that this is a circular argument, LC sought an entry point to this circle through trying to demonstrate truth of the bible using archaeological evidence that certain cities mentioned in the bible in fact existed. Indeed, they did, and so did Mt Olympus, Mycenae, Troy and Uluru, all involved to some extent in different primitive myths. Further, archaeology enlightens us that the books of the Pentateuch in the Old Testament are a recognised fabrication, with no evidence in other records for claimed events nor even some of the cities existing at the time, or in the form claimed. This is accepted on the evidence by scholars of the bible and of the period, and the sole attempt by my opponent to disagree relies entirely on simply claiming truth for the bible, and worse, making up stories to explain away the very obvious problems encountered. That is, my opponent *assumes* that the bible is inspired, truthful, and only from that base does LC attempt to use it as evidence. This is a circular argument, pure and simple.

I will say more about the arc of this debate and abandonment of principles of reason by my opponent in my closing statement. I telegraph this to give LC the opportunity first to argue otherwise. For now, I will discuss some of the points raised or more often avoided by LC.

Quote:

Originally Posted by **Logical Christian** 

I mentioned why the lack of new data and spent my time replying to your lack of study towards seeing the logical solutions to the problems you claim.

We have previously discussed the extent to which LC asked me to search for plausible explanations to problems in the bible. LC has yet to deal with the evidence we already have. Evolution is a fact and the theory of descent through variation and natural selection one of the best attested and most successful theories extant. Apparently, though, we should first **assume** the bible is so right that it can never be wrong. That is not *evidence*. That is not *reason to believe*.

Quote:

The flood is part of an important key message, yes. There's plenty of evidence around for there having been a global flood in **my** research also. But we haven't time to get bogged down on this topic now. *[my emphasis - X]*

In *your* research? What about reliably verified scientific research?

I am not in the least confused about the Noachian flood. Very few people on the planet are. It is a myth derived from prior cultures included in a set of fabricated books (as I have already referenced) and even among flood-believers the "best" explanation I have seen offered for how, for example, fresh, brackish and salt species survived a common flood was, goddunnit, i.e. magic. This is not evidence for god but blind devotion to a prior notion of god, to the exclusion of reason. Other obvious problems I stated with the flood are not answered by LC other than to refer me to a creationist web site without stating what argument or point I should note there. If I am to have answeringgenesis tossed on the table then I see you with [noanswersingenesis](#) and raise you a [TalkOrigins](#), not to mention centuries of reliable science.

Quote:

You're underestimating the Bible as and overestimating your own sureness. I'm sorry you can not see what the Bible says with your mindset.

LC advanced the bible as evidence for a particular god. LC has not advanced any credibility for the bible, as he admitted he needed to do to sustain his case. This is not to do with my sureness but simply the lack on my opponent's side of an effective epistemology rather than a "Believe this!". Under the circumstances it is quite difficult to see how the bible could ever be underestimated.

Quote:

If we're both so sure in our research, let's hope you're right, hey!

Oh dear, now I am being hit with the charitable christian, "Go to hell!".

Quote:

More study, less preconceived conclusions, will help you reconcile your issued with the Bible.

I note again the presumption by my opponent of bible truth, from which to argue that the bible is true, a position not supported by any argument but only by special pleading, denial of evidence and yet more fabrications of back-stories to support the absurdities in recognisable myths.

Quote:

Please reference all the humans that were sacrificed in the intention of atonement from sin at Gods' request – as you're inferring? I count one – the Son of God – Jesus. Those other 'clean' animals were all pointing forward to this one sacrifice and once it happened, that practice became redundant. ... Wrong again, by the way. The Bible says **Gen. 7:2** seven of each 'clean' animal entered the ark, and it was the seventh that was sacrificed after existing the ark, which would leave 3 pairs to chum up together.

I did not imply any more than one notional human sacrifice. I stated an example of the christian god "smelling a sweet savour" from the burning flesh of sacrificed animals, and made a flippant aside about Noah. LC's response is to ignore the implications for god's supposed nature by saying only one of every kind of clean animal was burnt and the "practice became redundant". We take it that both LC and their god continue to regard the sweet savour of sacrificial burning flesh as an idea good enough for god. The ultimate point is that christianity is based on scapegoating, as I discussed, the idea of human sacrifice as its core message. This, even though the "offering" in question held the singular advantages of suffering less than most people did through crucifixion, dying much faster, and knowing he would be resurrected. This is not even a sacrifice (if such were acceptable) but a party trick enclosed in a myth.

Apropos the prayer study to which I referred LC:

Quote:

You've missed the point again!

That is for readers to judge. I would say that your responsibility is to advance a point before I can have a chance of missing it.

Quote:

... you also assume the god knows about the test and what you're trying to prove. You need a triple blind experiment where you can fool a god for this test to be all conclusive.

Ah, it is cute little hide-and-seek god. Apparently, the one thing god will not do, just to prove his cleverness, is become apparent in any respect whether by direct evidence (as LC agreed early in the debate) or by indirect effects, including where god himself promised such effects. How closely must god resemble nothing before LC will consider at least the possibility that his god is nothing?

Quote:

The Bible is all about [original sin]. The reason 'sin' came and the universal solution for it. And we need no more sacrifices, by the way. It's been dealt with, the ledger is reconciled already. It's all through the book.

Reconciliation through live sacrifice. That is the ledger according to christianity, but to whom and why? God created evil, as stated three times in the bible

- I form the light, and create darkness: I make peace, and create evil: I the LORD do all these things. (Isaiah 45:7, KJV)
- Out of the mouth of the most High proceedeth not evil and good? (Lamentations 3:38)
- Shall a trumpet be blown in the city, and the people not be afraid? shall there be evil in a city, and the LORD hath not done it? (Amos 3:6, KJV)

The "sin" of Adam and Eve was established by god as an offence to himself who then demands a sacrifice of himself to himself but not really because he has the resurrection shuffle up his sleeve, after which christians demonstrate no moral qualities nor advance society in any respect but continue to burn people while hoping not to die, until a bunch of rationalists (including atheists and deists) tell them this is not a good idea so they give it up along with their profits from the slave trade.

Quote:

... Christians are human, and our nature involves some selfishness of varying levels from person to person. It isn't going to happen and we acknowledge that. ... First, I love the irony of being lectured on morals by an athiest. How did morals evolve exactly? Was there a global council that decided survival of the fittest is no longer the creed of all living things, lets get along now? What evidence do you have for morals evolving - of just hypothesis?

"Survival of the fittest" is a somewhat circular statement, fitness being defined by the fact of survival. I have already cited Pyysiainen & Hauser and also Rand et al to show supporting data for innate morality, a survival mechanism in a social species, and Epley et al to show that believers simply make it up and claim it was god. LC agrees that christians are no better morally than non-christians. Given these facts one wonders why god bothers, or why anyone bothers with god?

Quote:

I don't see myself as morally better than you Xeno.

I might call this generous, but I rather ask, what leads LC to think in that manner at all?

Quote:

While I have not touched on my findings that have lead me to doubt the other major religions and even evolution's evolving theory, I would like to spend the last part of my post on the argument that is most convincing to me, yet no doubt most controversial.

And so, having evaded and now openly abandoned any pretence at differentiating LC's personal beliefs from those who would believe in other gods on exactly the same basis, LC turns to the one thing this debate was not supposed to be about: revelation.

Quote:

After my most recent step of research convincing me Bible prophecy was most probably real, it brought a conclusion that there was someone who knows the future involved, God in this case. It was time to give it a sincere try ad see if it is the real deal.

Nebuchadnezzar still had no idea what his dream was (read Daniel 2, he denies remembering it and never claims to recognise it), Daniel's "prophecy" is not marryable with historical facts, there being no age of gold or of silver while the ages of bronze (brass) and iron were old hat, things on which Nebuchadnezzar relied for his own power. As for that damn sword-wielding messiah who is going to raise shepherds against the hapless Assyrians who are now said to be having an identity crisis ("you are not really Assyrians"), it fits perfectly with a then current tribal dream and was grasped by those who later invented the gospels (at least, the ones the church approved over other gospels) in an attempt to shore up their notion of a messiah.

Quote:

Here's the prayer.
"God of the Bible, if you're real, I sincerely want to become convinced. Help me to find you if you're real. "

Been there, done that, zilch.

Quote:

Prayer is not something you can experiment with. God is onto sceptic's games with prayer. It's not something he performs as if in a circus. "I'd better answer or they'll say bad things about me." kind of stuff.

The difficulty for god is, he can not be shown to answer any prayer at all. Remember, by LC's statement people who were suffering post-operative complications, although themselves believers and receiving sincere prayer from believers, were allowed to suffer the same as anyone else, just in case some rotten atheist might notice god answering a prayer. This is god's self-obsessed morality.

Quote:

I also understand how people can fall for thinking prayers were answered, when they weren't at all. For example:

- I understand :
 - - pray enough, and you'll get a coincidence sooner or later.
 - - pray vague enough and you'll get a coincidence sooner or later.
- - be creative enough and you'll see an answer
- - pray for certainty (or even probability) and you'll most likely see it happen.

I am wise to such ill conclusions. My answered prayers that have built my faith in the Christian God all fall outside all these pseudo prayer answer possibilities.

Do they? Would that be in exactly the same way as you attempt to convince people the bible is true, by following the above methodology basically substituting "reinterpret the bible" for "pray"?

I have a final question for Logical Christian with regard to his reliance on revelation, and

argument that god and the bible each make the other true. Rationally speaking, how would he differentiate his theory of knowledge, how he knows stuff, from that of people who fly planes into buildings?

There are [still] no good arguments for gods.

Yesterday, 12:56 PM

#17 



[Logical Christian](#) 

Junior Member

Join Date: Aug 2012
Posts: 16

 **Re: It is more reasonable to believe in the Christian god than not - Xeno v LC**

Before I close, let me respond to two things, if that's allowed in a closing statement.

Quote:

Originally Posted by **Xeno** 

*Quote: If we're both so sure in our research, let's hope you're right, hey!
Oh dear, now I am being hit with the charitable christian, "Go to hell!"*

Not at all Xeno! I was referring to; If researcher A finds 0% chance of digging up gold in a minute, so does not dig, and researcher B finds 100% chance of finding gold in a minute, so starts to dig. The only 'win/win', or even outcome, of this scenario is if researcher A is right, and no one gets any reward – which is your research's conclusion, Xeno.

You should know well by now my stand on there not being the hell you're eluding to.

Let me briefly share my research into this as I'm sure many are atheists because of the incorrect Hell teachings of some Christian denominations and it is the reason they find a Christian God unreasonable to believe in – so here's a little info to get your head around the general ignorance regarding the Bible and Hell.

First, people may be confused by the horrid depictions and implications of an eternal punishing hell with the Quran's many descriptions, the Bible only mentions the word Hell 54 times, and translated from 4 different Hebrew and Greek words, 41 of these times it means 'the grave'.

Second, all through the Bible, the 'saved' people get eternal life, the unsaved die, not live forever. eg Romans 6:23

Third, by cross referencing the use of the words 'eternal' or 'everlasting' or 'unquenchable' with other instances in the Bible, you can see their translated usage is not what you might interpret on a skim read. (I looked around and found this site seems to have looked into the topic better than most on what I believe hell in the Bible REALLY is <http://www.helltruth.com/q-a.aspx>)

Fourth, as atheists would point out, and do I, an eternal punishment would contradict the Bible's teaching of a God of love.

Having said this, there are Christian denominations out there who are into Hell being a real place of eternal torment. This is a fine example of people following what they're told or tradition and not researching for themselves.

My point, if you're going to believe it, or even quote hell – do some proper research first!

Xeno, I have no desires for you to burn for eternity in a place the Bible does not outline.

Enough digression . . .

Quote:

Originally Posted by **Xeno** 

*Quote: I don't see myself as morally better than you Xeno.
I might call this generous, but I rather ask, what leads LC to think in that manner at all?*

It was a little tie in with your points about Christians and moral decisions and also for I feel some Christians think they are better than atheists, and some atheists would hear/think they think this also. just wanted to declare I'm not one of them.

Finally,

Quote:

Originally Posted by **Xeno** 

I have a final question for Logical Christian with regard to his reliance on revelation, and argument that god and the bible each make the other true. Rationally speaking, how would he differentiate his theory of knowledge, how he knows stuff, from that of people who fly planes into buildings?

Just confirming my stand. The Bible and God have to both be 'true' or both be false. Not half half either way. This circular argument proves nothing on it's own, as I've said, but if you can find/prove the Bible or its God – the other is a given.

Sep 11, NYC I'm sure you're referring to.

First, the Bible teaches to love our enemies, turn the other cheek etc etc. Those involved in Sep 11 were not following Jesus' instructions. Let me draw that distinction to begin with!

Those involved in Sep 11 were committed to their religion there's no doubt about that. At best, to do such an inhumane thing and take their life also, all in the name of their religion shows true dedication – but nothing more.

It's one thing to be sincere and dedicated. But you can also be sincere or dedicated to something that is incorrect.

That goes for Christians, Muslims, atheists – everyone.

No matter how sincere you are, or how strong your belief (or disbelief) is in something, if that something is not the 'total reality' or 'truth', then it's wrong.

If the Christian God does not exist, then I'm sincerely wrong. If he does, then atheists sincerely are wrong.

If the Sep 11 people's beliefs are in fact right, and the teaching they followed are 'true' (see earlier post defining true) then we must conclude they were right to do what they did – as horrid and cruel that 'god' must be. However, I don't believe the teachings they are following are true, and neither do atheists. If either I or atheists are correct in our beliefs then the destruction of life was wrong and to no higher purpose. If there is a sadistic god out there, then we're all in trouble. But that's not what I've found to be 'truth'.

Regarding 'how I know stuff' – in depth research!

My 'theory of knowledge' is to look, look, look for yourself – not listen and believe what 'they' say. Re-read my post, I'm always ranting on about looking into stuff for yourself.

I had no reliance on special revelation to come to my conclusion. It was after my conclusion that answers to prayer confirmed my conclusions.

And now to conclude

After my research, I am 100% committed that it is more reasonable to believe in the Christian God than not.

I don't believe this because I was born into Christianity.

I don't believe this because I feel pressured.

I don't believe this to avoid an eternal lasting burning torture in hell. (you know I don't believe this by now)

I don't believe this hoping my life will be easier.

I don't believe this hoping it will sneak me into heaven.

I don't believe this to make money.

I don't believe this because I have never looked at the alternatives.

I believe out of research, logic and experience.

To most, 'Logical Christian' may seem like an ironic title. But logic and intense investigation is what I have performed to come to my conclusions. Perhaps different from many Christians that fit into one or more of the above categories.

A summary of my steps that lead me to this conclusion, as very sketchily demonstrated in my posts of this brief debate, are as follows:

1. It was possible for a god to exist - so kept investigating.
2. It was possible for a god to be illusive, neither provable or disprovable by science - so kept investigating.
3. There are many claims of eyewitness encounters with gods - so kept investigating

4. I found the Bible had many eyewitness accounts with a god and had the best credibility over other god referring documentation in regards to historical and story consistency when examined in-depth (and also in parallel, I found the godless evolution solution to life filled with unprovable and ever changing assumptions and hypothesis) - so investigated the Bible even more thoroughly.
5. I found the prophecies in the Bible to be overwhelmingly accurate in my research - so with the possibility of the there being a God and the Bible looking likely to have had divine assistance, I decided to try it - follow it - learn its concepts, understand it, and even take part in prayer.
6. With learning the Bibles' key principles of a life filled with love and positivity, and having answers to insanely improbable, though valid as a necessity, prayer requests - I have come to the final conclusion that it is more reasonable to believe in the Christian God than not.

If my study found God to be improbable, I'd be an atheist. If my study found an evil god, I'd live in fear of getting zapped by lightning and probably try and hide or live in denial, but it is thankfully a loving Christian God that I have concluded exists.

For me, in-depth research and study has not only proved God to me, but also lead me to discover God's relevance in my life.

I feel loved by a God in control. I feel like I have purpose. I feel like I have a future after this life that is far better than this one. I am compelled to help those in need. I am compelled to be healthy and enjoy life. I understand why bad things happen to everyone (good and bad). I understand that life sucks but this one is not forever - and if I'm sincerely wrong when I die - I'll never know about it.

All said and done, my statements will not convince anyone. It is purely up to each person to research for themselves, or sit and jeer.

I recommend a comprehensive unbiased investigation of the Bible before you write it off. You can't base your opinion on my testimony or Xenos "flippant" accusations against the Bibles credibility.

I have found it more reasonable to believe in the Christian God, and if you do some thorough research, I think you would too!

Thanksfor your hospitality

Love

Logical Christian 😊

Today, 03:04 PM

#18 



Xeno 

Plenty more where that one came from.

Join Date: May 2010
Location: Altitude 700 m
Posts: 9,997

 **Re: It is more reasonable to believe in the Christian god than not - Xeno v LC**

When presenting the first two quotations from me in their closing statement, LC completely misses the point but wanders off on a tangent of already-debunked wibble. Both of those quotations (read them in [the original](#)) are about discrimination, us and them. I could add this one:

Quote:

Originally Posted by **Logical Christian** 
I love the irony of being lectured on morals by an atheist.

Christians naturally discriminate between people without reason but based on the notion that they alone will survive death, that they are special, and it was on this that my words commented,

perhaps too esoterically.

Information about what the bible says about hell is as interesting as views on emu-breeding from a dead ferret. What is the point of identifying some words when LC has yet to bring a shred of evidence for the text itself? LC made no attempt to counter my archeological and historical evidence (on which LC had initially hoped to rely) that the bible is fabricated in all crucial respects with regard to the system of belief. Instead LC offers prophecy, where we have bunch of vengeful nomads sitting around a campfire telling each other stories about some hero putting their *current* oppressors to the sword. Then, when some preacher grabbed as a messiah turns up dead (not clutching any swords or shepherds, and no recognised Assyrians even being mentioned at the time) the tale magically becomes one about some unspecified thing to be done in some unspecified manner at some unspecified future time; but heavens it will be amazing! Apparently, this is called convincing prophecy.

Without repeating individual arguments, I have in the course of my posting in this debate shown that there is no useful truth in the bible, the old or new testament, just as there is none in any other corresponding god-tale. The fact that ancient tale-tellers and mythicists *in every land on earth* could remember the names of some places that had existed or did exist does not create any god in any of those places. We know that the crucial books of the bible, the Pentateuch in the OT and Gospels in the NT were made up after the events they purport to describe. Even with known redaction, conflicts exist in lineages, dates, events, sequences, people, actions and opinions, and the same passages are simply "reinterpreted" when *human* advance forces the mythicists to catch up, to keep some tenuous relation to present social and scientific reality. None of these conflicts can be resolved without inventing fiction to make the existing fiction vaguely plausible, and none of them produces a god which can be evidenced by any other means.

In reply to my question about how LC would distinguish their revelatory belief from corresponding believers in other gods, LC says essentially that LC is right and the others are wrong. There is in fact no valuable moral difference between the qu'ran and the bible but arguably superior moral value in the Vedas and The Iliad. This does not make any of their supposed gods true anyway. LC is unable to distinguish his faith from any other faith, as I have argued throughout the debate, and ultimately people believing on the same basis as LC risk undertaking the same extreme actions based on unevidenced belief as we have seen in every faith throughout history, christianity included.

Evidence and argument are what one is supposed to produce to affirm their position in the debate. This was discussed in my opening statement, about reliable models. Simple personal experience not able to be observed and replicated independently, that is, emotion and revelation, were specifically excluded as a sound basis of reason and accepted by LC. However, at the end of the debate we have from the affirmative side only a position that all is arbitrary, that singular personal belief by any person is sufficient for their belief to be considered true. What is "essential" or correct interpretation of the bible resides solely in the eye of the beholder, a single reader, and we know from research that it is only this to which god-belief amounts. Again, LC made no counter to the clear research results I provided from *Epley* on this subjectivism.

With no evidence for a god it is apparently necessary that god be made not falsifiable. It seems that if a researcher (atheist or not) says "if a god does thing X, it will be evidence of that god" then god must cunningly hide in case the researcher were to find something out. God hides in case someone is peeking. Thus, any such god is not only immoral in behaviour, avoiding good simply to continue hiding, but evidently quite powerless in the face of questions.

This magic god, tales similar in nature to the old and new testaments, can be found in every society at a corresponding stage of development. In every case they are found to be mythical, except for some people who believe each of them like some people still believe in astrology or homeopathy. Not one of those people can differentiate their primitive belief from any other primitive belief except on the basis of personal revelation, intrinsic unevidenced belief.

The arc of this debate which was supposed to be about reason moved quickly to circularity and personal revelation on the part of my opponent. Thus, the proposition is defeated: there is no more reason to believe in the christian god than not. There is nothing to the god story. There has never been anything to any of the god stories.

Afterword

I think it pertinent to comment also on some social consequences of believing in a god.

In the course of the discussion, LC agreed that christians are no better morally than atheists or followers of other religions, consistent with the fact that studies show no difference in free moral decisions, and that we are naturally social animals, so for what purpose is a god?

If there is neither evidence nor apparent reason for a god, why do people talk themselves into it? We see that a god is capable of doing something only in the frame of someone's personal imagination, and the one thing people would dearly love to imagine is that they are not going to die. A clue is offered by LC in these quotations:

Quote:

Originally Posted by **Logical Christian** 
If we're both so sure in our research, let's hope you're right, hey!

Quote:

Originally Posted by **Logical Christian** 
If researcher A finds 0% chance of digging up gold in a minute, so does not dig, and researcher B finds 100% chance of finding gold in a minute, so starts to dig. The only 'win/win', or even outcome, of this scenario is if researcher A is right, and no one gets any reward

...

If the Christian God does not exist, then I'm sincerely wrong. If he does, then atheists sincerely are wrong.

...

I understand that life sucks but this one is not forever - and if I'm sincerely wrong when I die - I'll never know about it.

Four times, LC presents some form of Pascal's Wager. This is a personal reason for belief, not wanting to die but relaxed about other people dying, as LC a few times made clear, including in the first of those statements.

It is based not on reason but emotion, the principal one being fear. We will do desperate things when we are afraid, things contrary to considered, rational evidence, and those things are apt to be self centred, discriminatory, ultimately anti-social. Historically christianity is characterised by conservatism, torturing and burning of "witches" and "blasphemers", opposing freedoms and democratic government brought in through The Enlightenment, and opposing abolition of the slave trade while it was feeding from it financially. LC told us that individual christians make errors, are no better than others, but the evidence is that organised religion is actively damaging to society, not only from the myriad of historical examples but even today. Religion is negatively correlated with successful societies, as discussed by G Paul in the Journal of Evolutionary Psychology [The Chronic Dependence of Popular Religiosity upon Dysfunctional Psychosociological Conditions](#).

There is also a strong streak of authoritarianism in such belief, as we see leaking out:

Quote:

I feel loved by a god in control.

I doubt that it matters much in which god someone "logically" believes, so long as the god seems to promise them an afterlife.

There is no reason for it, beyond the conservatism and the fear.

I thank my opponent for the debate and will be happy to commend some non-biblical books on request. 😊

There are [still] no good arguments for gods.



Protium 

...
Administrator

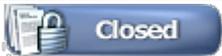
Join Date: Dec 2008
Location: Perth Western Australia
Posts: 13,062

Re: It is more reasonable to believe in the Christian god than not - Xeno v LC

Thanks must go to Logical Christian and Xeno for the effort and time in making this an interesting debate.

Cheers.

Faith is not a virtue... it is a servile weakness, it is a refuge in cowardice, and it is a willingness to follow with credulity people who are, in the highest degree, unscrupulous. - Christopher Hitchens



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