

Accusations Against God

Sunday, March 3, 2024

God's invitations to accuse:

Jer. 2.5 What iniquity have your fathers found in me?
Isa. 5.3,4 judge betwixt me and my vineyard. What could have been done more?
Isa. 41.21 Produce your cause, bring forth your strong reasons
Isa 1.18 Let us reason together
Isa 43.2 Let us plead together, declare thou
Micah 6.2 LORD hath a controversy, will plead with Israel
Rom 3.19 Every mouth stopped

Accusations found in the Bible

God's way is not "equal"? Equal as in "balanced on a scale". In this context possibly means God's way is not "fair" which is a common accusation in our day as well. But also might mean God's way is not "consistent" which fits the context, in that Israelites were upset that God was changing his treatment of them.

Eze 18.25-29 ye say, the way of the LORD is not equal
Eze 33.17-20 say, the way of the LORD is not equal.

God's Sovereignty: He is sovereign and also judges us? If God gives us no choices how can he judge anyone?

Rom 9.18-20 who hath resisted his will?
Job 9.12-15 who can hinder him?
Job 23.13-14 he is one mind and who can turn him?
Isa 46.10-11 I will do all my pleasure
Dan 4.35 none can stay his hand or say what doest thou?
Rom 3.5-7 if our unrighteousness commend God, is God unrighteous who taketh vengeance?
Rom 8.20,21 the creature was made subject to vanity, in hope
Deu 32.39 I kill, and I make alive, none can deliver out of my hand
Psa 58.10,11 righteous shall rejoice when seeth the vengeance, a God that judgeth in the earth

Sunday, March 10, 2024

Accusations from Unbelievers

Micah 7.1-3 Testify against me!

God treats our judgment as worthy of hearing! Yet today scorners, unbelievers, Buddhists, Hindus, Deists and Atheists accuse God of immorality! Modern Atheists copy Robert Ingersoll of late 19th century, who in his day simply copied Thomas Paine's arguments, such as those found in his "Age of Reason".

Genocide

Thomas Paine, Age of Reason p. 87: God is guilty of genocide.

Richard Dawkins, God Delusion: God of the Bible is, among other things, a bloodthirsty ethnic cleanser, infanticidal, genocidal, filicidal, capriciously malevolent bully.

Numbers 31.13 kill every male, woman, but women children keep alive for yourselves.

Deu 7.1-6 When the LORD hath cast out many nations before thee, thou shalt smite them and utterly destroy them; make no covenant with them, nor shew mercy unto them.

Superficially God commanded Israel to commit genocide.

Observations:

1. **If God** is real, such an objection is futile.

Deu 32.39 I kill, and I make alive, none can deliver out of my hand
God needs no defenders. He can defend himself.

We are really ignorant compared to God, who sees beginning and end, as well as thoughts and intents of the hearts. When the fog of human ignorance is dispelled by God's light all our objections will be seen as absurd.

2. We live in a **historical bubble**, which in fact was caused by the Bible's influence
Scientific advances

Political empowerment of individuals
Sophisticated government principles, such as jurisdiction
Humanistic outlook, image of God, every human life counts

3. Before the modern influence of the Bible on all societies, **genocidal war was commonplace, and often justifiable**. When enemies are implacable, and are intent on destroying your society, war must be waged in the most severe manner. George Washington became famous for his campaign against the Indians who were destroying settlements with impunity, because they were more mobile than the Europeans. But Washington refused to chase the Indian army, and instead went to their home territory and burned their villages and fields. This left them without sustenance for the winter, and forced them to stop their attacks, to rebuild and survive the coming winter. He became a hero, but today this is called a war crime.

4. There is a **difference between Murder and Judgment**. (See 1970s film called Hang 'Em High with Clint Eastwood).

Collective judgment (where a whole society is considered guilty of crimes) is often unavoidable
God showed much patience with the nations of Canaan. Gen 15.12-21, ten nations, but not ready yet (400 yrs)
God chose judgment by war, which actually gives the guilty the opportunity to defend themselves.
God was not obligated to offer mercy to unrepentant nations, but the opportunity existed, (Rahab, Gibeonites)

Sunday, March 17, 2024

Slavery

Exo 21.20-21 And if a man smite his servant, or his maid, with a rod, and he die under his hand; he shall be surely punished. Notwithstanding, if he continue a day or two, he shall not be punished: for he is his money.

Superficially God did endorse “slavery.”

Accusations:

John Spong, Episcopal Bishop of Newark, Rescuing the Bible from Fundamentalism, 2000 years of disbelief p. 316)
The slave is his money (so the master may beat him mercilessly)

Matt Dillahunty in a video excerpt railed on a Christian for hesitating when trying to explain God’s treatment of slaves in the Bible. Dillahunty demanded an unequivocal condemnation of the Bible for calling one person the **property** of another person.

Other problems with the passage quoted:

Corporal punishment of servants, criminals and children. Nowadays rejected, but in the past universally practiced. When there is no other possible incentive, corporal punishment is the only option, and unavoidable. Beating is not the only corporal punishment. Solitary or any other confinement, uncomfortable bedding, forced exercise, even standing in a corner, etc. are all forms of corporal punishment. Modern disdain for beatings is hypocritical.

The punishment of the master is not specified. Was he stoned as a murderer? Or fined? Ambiguous.

True meaning of “continue a day or two.” Servant temporarily disabled? Takes a couple of days to die?

Is his money. Word translated “money” is literally silver.” Property is not an accurate translation.

Notice: The law of Moses is not identical to the Law of God. The law of Moses is not ultimate righteousness, nor the ultimate standard of morality. (See Rom 2.26 where a Gentile keeps the righteousness of the law, yet remains uncircumcised, against the law of Moses.) The Mosaic covenant was not intended as perfect righteousness, but provided guidelines and incentives for a functional society, especially intended to set up the Messiah. The punishment of the master who exceeded in punishment was an incentive for masters to use caution in corporal punishment. But one incentive already existed, that the servant was valuable to the master for economic reasons. So excessive punishment of servants cost the master financially, and that served as incentive enough without a law prescribing further penalties against the master.

The change in terms

New versions change the words “servant” and “maid” to “slaves.” Also new versions change the word “money” to “property.” This allowed the scorners to accuse God of endorsing slavery and considering humans property, both of which are universally decried in modern America. Scorners assume the moral high ground and press the point without allowing contextualization, as if there could be no possible justification for “slavery” in any circumstance. This is a cheap shot against the Bible, and a completely false narrative.

Property. This text does not call humans “property.” But servants were collectively called possessions not identical to personal property but indicating an economic commodity to be invested in and traded.

Lev 25.44-46 thy bondmen shall be of the heathen, they shall be your possession

Slavery. Notice the inflammatory use of the word slavery, by all modern versions, and by scorners to accuse God. When the KJV was translated “slave” was an uncommon word, used only twice in the Bible to describe bondage. “Servant” is used hundreds of times, as well as bondage, bondservant, bondman, bondmaid, maid etc.

The reason this matters: During the fight for prohibition, the term “slavery” was the universal term to describe the American (European) system of chattel slavery. American slavery was unique in several ways.

Industrial: The industrial revolution in Europe produced incentives to mass produce and mass market goods. The experience of slaves in America was horribly worsened after the invention of the cotton gin, which caused a mass transfer of domestic and small farm servants, to large farms. This mass transfer greatly increased the break up of black families, the selling off of small children, and many other horrible experiences. This great affliction is now embedded into the term “slavery” which does not fit the Bible’s treatment of servants.

Racial: Historically slaves have come from all peoples. Europeans were sold as slaves by the millions during the middle ages, trafficked especially by Turks and Arabs. But in the European economic boom after the printing press, the European craving for sugar incentivized slaveholding in tropical plantations in the islands and Americas. But all ethnicities of slaves tended to die of malaria and other tropical diseases. Sub-saharan Africans are genetically more resistant to malaria, and tended to survive in these plantations, making African slaves more valuable. This produced the Atlantic slave trade, where coastal Africans would capture inland Africans, and sell them to European ships, which would deliver them to plantations in the Americas. This led to the worldwide perception of blacks as slaves. This perception is embedded in the modern term “slavery” which does not fit the situation in the Bible.

Anti-Biblical rationalizations: “Christianized” Europeans stereotyped Africans as inferior, and several myths became widespread stigmatizing them over the color of skin. The “mark of Cain” was unequivocally absurd, as if African skin was somehow related to the mark God gave Cain, which mark was intended to protect Cain from violence after murdering his brother. Another was the “curse of Canaan,” the son of Ham. The idea is that Ham was father of Africans, and God cursed him. But the Bible specifically mentions the 10 nations of Canaan, later reduced to 7 nations, that were cursed, and Israel warred against them in their land. No indication exists that they were black, or that they were related to sub-saharan Africans.

Menstealing: The African slave trade was condemned by all ethical standards even at its peak in the late 1700s, because it was intentional capture of free people, to sell into bondage for the purpose of profit. This is not “chronological snobbery,” where moderns condemn ancients without walking in their shoes. This is contemporary ethical thinkers and lawmakers condemning the practice during the entire time. But money talks, and the slave trade produced money.

Human bondage is not inherently immoral. There are obvious justifications, and historically bondservice was practiced universally without ethical objections. (Even the ethical objections by Christians against the American system of chattel slavery came from the Bible.) Justification for servitude hinges on mutual benefit of both servant and master. The Bible regulates master-servant relationships, and counsels servants to be obedient (1 Co 7.20-21, Eph 6.5, Col 3.22) The Bible treats at least 5 categories of human bondage, none of which are immoral, and all of which provide some benefit even to the servant.

1. Contractual bondage.

Ex 21.2 If thou buy an Hebrew servant, six years he shall serve: in the seventh he shall go out free for nothing. All Hebrew servants were contractual servants. The maximum term was six years. There were benefits on both sides of the contract. It was voluntary, or at least better than the alternative. It is estimated that more than half of immigrants to America before the 20th century were “indentured servants.” That is they were contractually obligated to serve a period of time to pay off their debt, either for the passage, or some other debt. Many parents would indenture their children as a means of training them in some field of labor. We still have interns working for nothing. Benefit for both sides.

2. Debtor bondage.

Isa 50.1 which of my creditors is it to whom I have sold you? Debtors who could not pay would be subject to being sold against the debt. Whether this was for a term of years, or because of the size of the debt, perpetual, it was not immoral. Benefits both sides. Debtor servants could buy their own freedom, or others for them. While servants they were protected by God’s laws governing the treatment of servants, as in our text above. Debtor prison has proven counterproductive in modern society, so bankruptcy laws now protect borrowers from financial misadventure.

3. Judicial bondage.

Exo 22.2-3 If a thief be found breaking up, he should make full restitution; if he have nothing, then he shall be sold for his theft.

Imprisonment, hard labor encampments, road gangs, community service, etc. are all derivatives of judicial bondage. When a crime is committed, punishment can ethically and morally include bondage. Historically they were sentenced to galley slaves on ships, mines, armies, etc. This benefits the condemned in that he can be sentenced proportionately for his crime.

4. Spoil of war captivity.

Deu 21.10,11 when war against enemies, taken them captive, bring them home to thy house, etc. Genocidal wars were, and still may be, sometimes unavoidable, but they are universally devastating to all sides. When Santa Anna commanded the murder of all surrendered survivors at the Alamo, and then at Goliad, he made his war unwinnable, since no Texan would ever surrender again. The value of human servants incentivized the avoidance of

indiscriminate killing of enemies. Taking them captive was beneficial to both sides. As servants they were protected by God's incentive guidelines.

5. Social bondage.

Lev 25.47 If thy brother wax poor, and sell himself unto the stranger, his brethren may redeem him.

All ethical societies provided a social safety net, to keep their people from starving. Having a system of human bondage allowed extremely poor, or destitute people, to have a way to keep from starving. While not ideal, selling oneself into servitude guaranteed food and shelter for self and family. Benefits both sides.

Menstealing

Bible condemns menstealing as immoral

Exo 21.16 And he that stealeth a man, and selleth him, he shall surely be put to death.

Deu 24.7 If a man found stealing brethren, maketh merchandise of him, that thief shall die.

1 Tim 1.10 For whoremongers, menstealers, liars, perjured persons, contrary to sound doctrine

The Bible universally condemns menstealing with capital punishment. The Bible specifically condemns unequivocally the American system of slavery. Abolitionist movements were indisputably Christian.

Abolitionism sparked by the Bible

1 Cor 7.21-23 if thou mayest be made free, use it rather...be not ye the servants of men

Originally the Quakers, but eventually believers from all denominations joined abolitionism, decrying American chattel slavery as immoral. Some were fanatical and died as "martyrs" such as John Brown and his four sons. Southern religious leaders who used Bible passages to defend American slavery were forced to ignore the injunctions in the Bible against what the modern slave system had done, stealing people from Africa, and holding them and all their children in bondage for perpetuity.

Modern scorners that accuse God of endorsing slavery are wrong factually, and intellectually. They must shut down dialogue as morally outraged, because calm consideration of the Bible's treatment of servants dispels the myth. The Bible and Christians were the inspiration against modern slavery, and trying to accuse God of immorality by conflating modern menstealing with the Bible's regulation of bondservice is not just a "cheap shot," it is an inexcusable distortion of the truth.

Sunday, March 24, 2024

Romans 9:14-24 Who art thou that repliest against God?

God invites to frankly accuse him, and judge him, but be careful, and be warned: you may make inappropriate arguments!

Does a potter have power over the clay?

What if God had reasons for what he did?

Other Accusations:

Dawkins, God Delusion p. 31: The God of the Old Testament is arguably the most unpleasant character in all fiction: jealous and proud of it; a petty, unjust, unforgiving control-freak; a vindictive, bloodthirsty ethnic cleanser, a misogynistic, homophobic, racist, infanticidal, genocidal, filicidal, pestilential, megalomaniacal, sadomasochistic, capriciously malevolent bully.

"Unpleasant" in the following ways:

*Jealous	he carefully guards what is his own
Proud of his jealousy	considers it commendable
Petty	his complaints are minor
Unjust	he acts or judges wrongly
Unforgiving	he refuses to forgive even when he may without inconvenience
Control-freak	he obsessively wants to control others' business
Vindictive	he is characterized by a strong desire for personal revenge
Blood-thirsty	he is eager to kill and enjoys it
Ethnic-cleanser	he expels unwanted ethnicities from his society
Misogynistic	he despises women
Homophobic	he fears or hates 'homosexuals'
*Racist	he considers his race superior
Infanticidal	he kills babies
Genocidal	he systematically kills members of a group intending to destroy the whole group
Filicidal	he kills his own children
*Pestilential	he causes, or is like a disease
Megalomaniacal	he is obsessed with his own power

Sadomasochistic	he gets pleasure from pain, his own or others
Capricious	he acts according to whims, or fleeting emotions
Malevolent	he wishes or wills harm to others
Bully	he uses superior strength or advantage to inappropriately intimidate

Jefferson's letter to William Short of August 4, 1820, (also quoted in Dawkins, *The God Delusion*)
The Christian God is a being of terrific character – cruel, vindictive, capricious and unjust.

Thomas Paine, *Age of Reason*

p. 8, footnote: God visits the sins of the fathers upon the children.

Moral justice cannot take the innocent for the guilty, even if the innocent would offer itself

Misogynistic

Order in Family

Gen 3.16	thy desire shall be to thy husband, he shall rule over thee
1 Co 11.3	head of the woman is the man
1 Co 11.8-10	man is not of the woman, nor created for the woman, but woman for the man
1 Co 11.11-12	neither is the man without the woman, neither the woman without the man in the Lord. As the woman is of, the man is by.
Eph 5.22-24	Wives submit, husband is the head of the wife, in every thing.
Eph 5.33	love wife as himself, wife see that she reverence her husband.
Col 3.18	Wives submit unto husbands, fit in the Lord.
1 Pe 3.1-6	wives be in subjection to husbands, Sara obeyed Abraham, calling him lord.

Order in Church

1 Ti 3.2	A bishop must be blameless, husband of one wife
Titus 1.6	if any be blameless, the husband of one wife
1 Ti 3.12	deacons husbands of one wife
1 Co 14.34,35	Let women keep silence in the churches, not permitted unto them to speak (notice “as also saith the law” which is notoriously silent about it.)
1 Ti 2.11,12	Let woman learn in silence with all subjection, not teach nor usurp authority
Acts 21.9	had four daughters, which did prophesy.
Exo 15.20	Miriam the prophetess, sister of Aaron
Jdg 4.4	Deborah, a prophetess,
2 Ki 22.14	Huldah the prophetess, communed with her
Joel 2.28	sons and daughters shall prophesy
Acts 2.17	sons and daughters shall prophesy
1 Co 11.5	Every woman that prayeth or prophesieth uncovered dishonoreth her head.

[Noadiah evil prophetess Neh 6.14, Jezebel, evil prophetess Rev 2.20]

Order in Government (apparently no text of Bible rejects the idea of women ruling or reigning or judging. Notice of many queens and female rulers no man of God rebuked them for it. Think John Knox: *The Monstrous Rule of Women*)

Gen 1.28	God blessed them , replenish the earth and subdue it, have dominion
Jdg 4.4	Deborah, a prophetess, judged Israel at that time
Isa 3.12	children are their oppressors, and women rule over them (a shame for men, because in competition men have the advantage)

Women esteemed more in the Bible than in other cultures:

Num 27.1–8	if no son, give inheritance to daughter (daughters were given a dowry, just like non-firstborn sons were given partial inheritance, but land was normally passed to sons)
Mal 2.14-16	did not he make one? Take heed none deal treacherously against wife
Mark 10.11,12	Whosoever shall put away his wife, and marry another, committeth adultery against her . If a woman put away her husband!

Women worshipping

Exo 38.8	women assembling at the door of the tabernacle
Luke 2.37	widow departed not from the temple, served God fastings and prayers
Acts 16.13	river side where prayer was wont to be made, spake unto the women which resorted thither.
Luke 10.39	Mary sat at Jesus' feet, heard his word (not rebuked)

Women serving in ministry

Prov 31.10-31	industrious capable woman
Luke 8.3	Joanna, Susanna and many others ministered unto him of their substance (offerings sustaining Jesus' ministry)
Luke 10.38-42	Woman learning at Jesus' feet, not rebuked, but praised
1 Co 7.34	unmarried woman careth for the things of the Lord
Acts 9.36	Tabitha, Dorcas, woman full of good works and alms

Acts 16.14,15 woman named Lydia, attended, baptized, abide there, constrained us.
 Acts 18.2,26 wife Priscilla, they took him, and expounded the way of God
 1 Co 16.19 Priscilla, church in their house
 Rom 16.1,2 Phoebe, servant of the church, receive her, assist her in whatsoever business, succourer of many, and myself also
 Rom 16.3,4 Priscilla, my helpers in Christ Jesus
 Rom 1.6 Mary, bestowed much labor on us
 Rom 16.12 Tryphena and Tryphosa (feminine names) labor in the Lord.
 Rom 16.13 Rufus, his mother and mine
 Rom 16.15 Julia, Nereus and his sister,
 Php 4.3 those women which labored with me in the gospel,
 1 Ti 5.10 brought up children, lodged strangers, washed feet, relieved afflicted, every good work
 John 20.15 touch me not, not yet ascended, go to my brethren, and say unto them,

Women spiritually and morally equal to men

Gen 1.2,27 man in his own image, male and female created he them (woman included in the image of God)
 Gal 3.28 neither Jew, Greek, bond free, **male nor female**
 1 Co 7.14 unbelieving husband is **sanctified by the wife**, else children unclean, but now holy.
 1 Ti 5.16 if any man **or woman** have widows, let them relieve them (woman financially responsible for her widow)
 1 Pe 3.4 the hidden **man** of the heart
 Mat 22.30 (Mark 12.25, Luke 20.35) in the resurrection they neither marry nor are given in marriage.
 Mark 9:35 if any man desire to be first, the same shall be last (whatever lost in this life will be recovered in the next)

Conflicting Objectives (Modern society has narrow self-centered objectives. These can't help but conflict with God's greater objectives)

Enlightenment Rationalism/Humanism:

Unalienable rights
 Grace,
 Pursuit of happiness
 Universal equality
 Human potential
 Individual empowerment
 Personal fulfilment
 Immediate gratification

God, Christian worldview

Unmerited and unconditional gifts of life, liberty and property:
 Pursuit of the knowledge of God, and conformity to his image
 Maximum functionality
 Glory of God
 Empowerment for service (usefulness)
 Eternal life
 Eternal reward

Homophobic (Transphobia, etc.)

Phobia is fear, not hate. God is not phobic! No fear.
 But God does hate sin, anything that dishonors his will or creative purposes.
 All forms of fornication are sin, including homosexuality.
 God specifically hates homosexuality.
 Note: The narrative is that a **person is a homosexual**, as opposed to engaging in homosexual behavior, which presupposes it is part of his nature, he cannot help it, it is God's doing, etc.
 But homosexuality in the Bible is the excess of lust, or the corruption and confusion of lust by our wicked nature. The idea that "orientation" is immutable is clearly false. Married people commit homosexual acts. 46 percent of adult homosexuals report they were raped as children by homosexual predators.

Gen 13.13 sinners before the Lord exceedingly
 Gen 18.20 the cry of Sodom is great, their sin is very grievous
 Judg 19.22 sons of Belial, bring forth the man, that we may know him
 Isa 3.9 they declare their sin as Sodom
 Eze 16.9,50 this the iniquity of Sodom, pride, fulness, abundance, idleness...haughty, **committed abomination**
 Many things in OT were commanded to be an abomination to Israelites, but this is an abomination to God
 2 Pe 2:6-8 Sodom condemned, live ungodly, wicked, filthy conversation (manner of life)
 Jude 7 Sodom giving selves over to fornication, going after strange flesh
 Deu 23.17 no whore of daughters, nor a sodomite of the sons of Israel
 1 Ki 14.24 were also sodomites in the land, abominations of the nations
 1 Ki 15.12 he took away the sodomites out of the land
 1 Ki 22.46 remnant of sodomites he took out of the land
 2 Ki 23.7 brake down the houses of the sodomites, were by the house of the Lord, where women wove hangings
 Lev 18.22 thou shalt not lie with mankind as with womankind: it is abomination
 Lev 20.13 If a man lie with mankind, both have committed an abomination: death
 Rom 1.26,27 vile affections, against nature, burned in lust, unseemly, error

1 Co 6.9 nor effeminate (passive homosexual), nor abusers with mankind (active homosexual) [criticism of KJV, too euphemistic]

1 Ti 1.10 whoremongers, them that defile themselves with mankind

Transphobic

Deu 22.5 The woman shall not wear that which pertaineth unto a man, neither a man a woman's garment, do so are abomination unto God

Manipulative and deceptive terminology: I recommend Websters Unabridged 2nd Edition to study genuine meanings. Internet (and modern dictionary) definitions are grammatically biased against traditional usage. The argument over language is neither irrelevant nor insignificant.

Gay joyous and lively VS homosexual (especially male)

Gender grammatical association of words or objects with masculinity or femininity VS personal

sexual exploration, imagination, how one feels inside

Assigned gender biological sex VS imposed sex

Cisgender Cis- prefix means on this side (hasn't changed), trans- prefix means on other side (has crossed over)

Genderfluid can't decide...in reality all people are genderfluid, anyone can imagine themselves as the other sex

Identifies as says so (doesn't make it so)

Hetero-normativity no such thing as normal, only normal in your narrow thinking

Latinx dislike of grammatical gender expressions in Spanish

Misgender noticing the actual sex of an individual who has tried to change

Orientation current lust preference

Transgender term justifying exploration of sexuality, by cross-dressing, claiming to have 'gender dysphoria' (a genuine but rare mental health disorder)

Deadnaming Using original name instead of newer make-believe name