Part One of a Five Part Series: Questions Answered by Herb Silverman

The following Part One questions are about God belief:

What do you think of the "Good Book?"
That is one of the most remarkable euphemisms ever coined.

Do you believe God has a creator?
No. Since there is no evidence for any gods, there is no evidence for a creator of gods.

If there is only one god, why are there multiple religious texts that contradict each other?
Because all these stories are made up by fallible humans.

What do you think God was doing before he created humans?
Whether believers think the universe is several thousand or several billion years old, they still believe God predates it by billions of years or eternity — whatever that means. If God's primary concern is with us, he sure waited a long time before saying to himself, "I'm lonely. I think I'll create human beings to mess around with."

Is there a connection among all gods?
Yes. They are all nonexistent.

Isn't it up to atheists to prove their claims?
No, a person making a claim is responsible for providing evidence. For instance, suppose I tell you that the universe was created 15 minutes ago and a supernatural being planted false memories in you. You can't disprove my claim, but you think it is nonsense, right? Atheists have the same reaction to god beliefs.

What do you think of the argument: "We don't know, therefore God did it."
This is called the "God of the Gaps." Lightning, hurricanes, earthquakes, and floods used to be included, until science explained what caused these phenomena.

Does the concept of God having no beginning also mean he has no end?
God has no beginning or end because he doesn't exist.

Why are you angry with God?
Atheists are no angrier with God than with the Tooth Fairy. Only theists can be angry with God, and some are because they haven't heard good explanations about why a good and powerful god allows so much evil in the world.

Why are you rebelling against God?
You can only rebel against people who exist.

How many times does atheism have to be completely broken before you believe in God?
Only once. A single piece of credible evidence for the existence of a god.

The Bible says God is love. Isn't this enough?
If you use "love" as the definition of God, then I'm a believer.

What do you think of liberal definitions of a god?
Many define gods in a way that totally blurs any distinction between theism and atheism. For example, as Nature, Potential Within, Love, and so forth. If I believed in such a god, so what?

Do you know most people dislike the word "atheism" because it is such a negative word?
Negative isn't always bad. Other negative words are independent, nondiscrimination, and antidote. Religious people describe their deity in negative terms (infinite, unlimited, infallible). And 80 percent of the Ten Commandments (the eight "thou shalt nots") are negative. The two positives are honor your parents and remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy, though they can't seem to agree on which day the Sabbath falls or exactly what "holy" means. Furthermore, negative protestors founded the dominant religion in this country. They are known as ***Protest****ants, or Protestants.*

Is there a religion that believes all other religions are false?
Just about all religions believe the others are false. I agree with them, but yours is also false.

Why do theists have more confidence in their beliefs than do atheists?
Theists have unshakable faith, which should be shaken.

Why don't you accept the facts we know about God?
Daniel Patrick Moynihan *famously said, "Everyone is entitled to his own opinion, but not his own facts." In many religions there are countless arguments for the existence of a god, but absolutely no facts. And I don't much value fact-free opinions.*

What do you think of religious people?
I don't want to generalize. But if they believe in a loving God who wants you to love and respect your fellow humans, that's fine with me. On the other hand, if they believe in a jealous God who wants you to put your love of Him above your love of humans, then I hope you don't rise to a position of political power.

Should we try to be more like the god of the Bible?
No. The god of the Bible is a mass murderer.

Why do you think God created so many galaxies?
How could a god create 50 billion galaxies, each with two hundred billion stars, and then rejoice in the smell of burning goat flesh?

Aren't today's religions much more reasonable than old-time religions?
Ancient Greeks with their gods throwing lightning bolts was certainly silly. But no sillier than burning bushes talking to people, or guys walking on water.

How much can we know?
Our knowledge is finite, while our ignorance of necessity must be infinite.

Why do you take pleasure in offending religious people?
I don't. I'm sorry so many theists get upset when I explain my views to them. They wouldn't be offended it they could provide evidence for their god.

Why do some people refer to themselves as "non-believers" instead of atheists?
Because these atheists think the word "atheist" is disliked by so many people. The more people acknowledge their atheism, the less disliked the word will become.

Don't you believe that quoting scripture is a strong argument for God's existence?
Only for people who like circular reasoning, by assuming scripture is true.

Do you believe in religion even if you don't believe in God?
Yes. I know religions exist, even though I think all theistic religions are false.

Can someone feel God's presence in their heart?
No, not in any part of their body, including their toes. Your brain, not your heart, has feelings.

How about atheists proving that God doesn't exist, and stop being a draft-dodger?
How about you proving the Flying Spaghetti Monster doesn't exist?

What sets religions apart from cults?
The more followers, the more likely to be called a religion.

What is the significance of God creating a woman from a rib as told in Genesis?
God created man out of dust, and must have run out of dust.

Why are the dominant religions anti-woman?
Because they were made up by misogynistic men.

Is all religion man-made?
No, some are women-made. All religions are made up by humans.

How can The Book of Mormon be a religious Bible when it is full of lies?
As are all so-called holy books.

As a Christian, I don't think I could go on living without a belief in God. How can you?
I'm sorry that you seem to have such a sad and empty life. Mine is just fine.

Would you agree that God is invisible?
Only if invisible and nonexistent mean the same thing.

What does it mean when people say they cannot imagine a world without God?
It means they have a very limited imagination.

Why are atheists so arrogant?
Which sounds more arrogant? Worldview one:
I know God created the entire universe just for the benefit of humans. He watches me constantly and cares about everything I say and do. I know how he wants me and everyone else to behave and believe. He is perfect and just, which is why we face an eternity of either bliss or torture, depending on whether we believe in Him.
Worldview two:
We're the product of millions of years of evolution. Most species are extinct, as humans will eventually be. I hope to make a positive difference in my life because it's the right thing to do, not because of future rewards or punishments in an afterlife. When I don't know something, which is often, I say, "I don't know."

Don't you know you are supposed to seek God in order to find him?
"God" always seems to win at hide-and-seek.

What is your favorite question to ask a god believer?
How would you behave differently if you stopped believing in God? I once asked this of a minister in a debate. He thought for a minute and said, "I'm sometimes tempted by other women, but don't give in to the temptation because of my love for Jesus, knowing how much it would hurt Jesus." I responded that I don't give in to those temptations because of my love for my wife Sharon. I think the minister's wife preferred my answer.

When do you think God will return?
*On the 12th (of never). Thanks to **Johnny Mathis** for this information.*

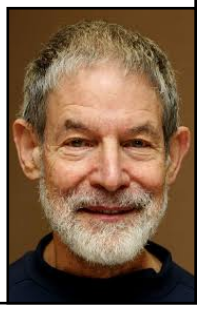
How would someone who doesn't believe in God explain the sunrise?
The sun does not rise. The Earth rotates on its axis and completes one solar revolution every year.

What would you say to someone who believes in God, but not the devil?
You are half-right.

Herb Silverman is a regular contributor to the quarterly publication *The Freethought Society News*. The editors thank Silverman for all of his excellent submissions. His past submissions can be found at the following Free-thought Society website page:

https://www.ftsociety.org/herb-silverman-articles/

Silverman is the author of two books, *Candidate Without a Prayer* and *An Atheist Stranger in a Strange Religious Land*. Both books are available online and at your local bookstores.



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