

## A Turning Point in History

# The Fall of Atheism

H A R U N   Y A H Y A

There are significant turning points in the history of mankind. We are now living in one of them. Some call it globalization and some say that this is the genesis of the "information age." These are true, but there is yet a more important concept than these. Although some are unaware of it, great advances have been made in science and philosophy in the last 20-25 years. Atheism, which has held sway over the world of science and philosophy since the 19<sup>th</sup> century is now collapsing in an inevitable way.

Of course, atheism, the idea of rejecting God's existence, has always existed from ancient times. But the rise of this idea actually began in the 18<sup>th</sup> century in Europe with the spread and political effect of the philosophy of some anti-religious thinkers. Materialists such as Diderot and Baron d'Holbach proposed that the universe was a conglomeration of matter that had existed forever and that nothing else existed besides matter. In the 19<sup>th</sup> century, atheism spread even farther. Thinkers such as Marx, Engels, Nietzsche, Durkheim or Freud applied atheist thinking to different fields of science and philosophy.

The greatest support for atheism came from Charles Darwin who rejected the idea of creation and proposed the theory of evolution to counter it. Darwinism gave a supposedly scientific answer to the question that had baffled atheists for centuries: "How did human beings and living things come to be?" This theory convinced a great many people of its claim that there was a mechanism in nature that animated lifeless matter and produced millions of different living species from it.

Towards the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, atheists formulated a world view that they thought explained everything; they denied that the universe was created saying that it had no beginning but had existed forever. They claimed that the universe had no purpose but that its order and balance were the result of chance; they believed that the question of how human beings and other living things came into being was answered by Darwinism. They believed that Marx or Durkheim had explained history and sociology, and that Freud had explained psychology on the basis of atheist assumptions.

However, these views were later invalidated in the 20<sup>th</sup> century by scientific, political and social developments. Many and various discoveries in the fields of astronomy, biology, psychology and social sciences have nullified the bases of all atheist suppositions.

In his book, *God: The Evidence, The Reconciliation of Faith and Reason in a Postsecular World*, the American scholar Patrick Glynn from the George Washington University writes:

The past two decades of research have **overturned nearly all the important assumptions and predictions of an earlier generation of modern secular and atheist thinkers relating to the issue of God**. Modern thinkers assumed that science would reveal the universe to be ever more random and mechanical; instead it has discovered unexpected new layers of intricate order that bespeak an almost unimaginably vast master design. Modern psychologists predicted that religion would be exposed as a neurosis and outgrown; instead, religious commitment has been shown empirically to be a vital component of basic mental health...

Few people seem to realize this, but by now it should be clear: Over the course of a century in the great debate between science and faith, the tables have completely turned. In the wake of Darwin, atheists and agnostics like Huxley and Russell could point to what appeared to be a solid body of testable theory purportedly showing life to be accidental and the universe radically contingent. Many scientists and intellectuals continue to cleave to this worldview. But they are increasingly pressed to almost absurd lengths to defend it. Today the concrete data point strongly in the direction of the God hypothesis.[1](#)

Science, which has been presented as the pillar of atheist/materialist philosophy, turns out to be the opposite. As another writer puts it, "The strict materialism that excludes all purpose, choice and spirituality from the world simply cannot account for the data pour in from labs and observatories."[2](#)

In this article, we will briefly analyze the conclusions arrived at by different branches of science on this issue and examine what the forthcoming "post-atheist" period will bring to humanity.

## COSMOLOGY: THE COLLAPSE OF THE CONCEPT OF AN ETERNAL UNIVERSE AND THE DISCOVERY OF CREATION

The first blow to atheism from science in the 20<sup>th</sup> century was in the field of cosmology. The idea that the universe had existed forever was discounted and it was discovered that it had a beginning; in other words, it was scientifically proved that it was created from nothing.

This idea of an eternal universe came to the Western world along with materialist philosophy. This philosophy, developed in ancient Greece, stated that nothing else exists besides matter and that the universe comes from eternity and goes to eternity. In the Middle Ages when the Church dominated Western thought, materialism was forgotten. However in the modern period, Western scientists and philosophers became consumed by a curiosity about these ancient Greek origins and revived an interest in materialism.

The first person in the modern age to propose a materialist understanding of the universe was the renowned German philosopher Immanuel Kant—even though he has not a materialist in the philosophical sense of the word. Kant proposed that the universe was eternal and that every possibility could be realized only within this eternity. With the coming of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, it became widely accepted that the universe had no beginning, and that there was no moment of creation. Then, this idea, adopted passionately by dialectical materialists such as Karl Marx, Friedrich Engels, came into the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

This idea has always been compatible with atheism. This is because to accept that the universe had a beginning would mean that God created it and the only way to counter this idea was to claim that the universe was eternal, even though this claim had no basis on science. A dogged proponent of this claim was Georges Politzer who became widely known as a supporter of materialism and Marxism in the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century through his book *Principes Fondamentaux de Philosophie* (The Fundamental Principles of Philosophy). Assuming the validity of the model of an eternal universe, Politzer opposed the idea of a creation:

The universe was not a created object, if it were, then it would have to be created instantaneously by God and brought into existence from nothing. To admit creation, one has to admit, in the first place, the existence of a moment when the universe did not exist, and that something came out of nothingness. This is something to which science can not accede.[3](#)



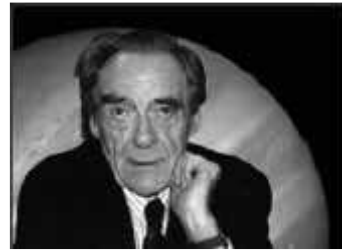
**Immanuel Kant: Proposed the idea of a universe without a beginning or an end. He was terribly wrong.**

By supporting the idea of an eternal universe against that of creation, Politzer thought that science was on his side. However, very soon, the fact that Politzer alluded to by his words, “if it is so, we must accept the existence of a creator”, that is, that the universe had a beginning, was proven.

This proof came as a result of the “**Big Bang**” theory, perhaps the most important concept of 20<sup>th</sup> century astronomy.

The Big Bang theory was formulated after a series of discoveries. In 1929, the American astronomer, Edwin Hubble, noticed that the galaxies of the universe were continually moving away from one another and that the universe was expanding. If the flow of time in an expanding universe were reversed, then it emerged that the whole universe must have come from a single point. Astronomers assessing the validity of Hubble’s discovery were faced with the fact that this single point was a “metaphysical” state of reality in which there was an infinite gravitational attraction with no mass. Matter and time came into being by the explosion of this mass-less point. In other words, the universe was created from nothing.

On the one hand, those astronomers who are determined to cling to materialist philosophy with its basic idea of an eternal universe, have attempted to hold out against the Big Bang theory and maintain the idea of an eternal universe. The reason for this effort can be seen in the words of Arthur Eddington, a renowned materialist physicist, who said, "Philosophically, the notion of an abrupt beginning to the present order of Nature is repugnant to me".<sup>4</sup> But despite the fact that the Big Bang theory is repugnant to materialists, this theory has continued to be corroborated by concrete scientific discoveries. In their observations made in the 1960's, two scientists, Arno Penzias and Robert Wilson, detected the radioactive remains of the explosion (cosmic background radiation). These observations were verified in the 1990's by the COBE (Cosmic Background Explorer) satellite.



**John Maddox: His prophecy about the Big Bang utterly failed.**

In the face of all these facts, atheists have been squeezed into a corner. Anthony Flew, an atheist professor of philosophy at the University of Reading and the author of *Atheistic Humanism*, makes this interesting confession:

Notoriously, confession is good for the soul. I will therefore begin by confessing that **the Stratonician atheist has to be embarrassed by the contemporary cosmological consensus**. For it seems that the cosmologists are providing a scientific proof of what St. Thomas contended could not be proved philosophically; namely, that the universe had a beginning. So long as the universe can be comfortably thought of as being not only without end but also without beginning, it remains easy to urge that its brute existence, and whatever are found to be its most fundamental features, should be accepted as the explanatory ultimates. Although I believe that it remains still correct, it certainly is neither easy nor comfortable to maintain this position in the face of the Big Bang story <sup>5</sup>

An example of the atheist reaction to the Big Bang theory can be seen in an article written in 1989 by John Maddox, editor of *Nature*, one of the best-known materialist-scientific journals.

In that article, called "Down With the Big Bang," Maddox wrote that the Big Bang is "philosophically unacceptable," because "creationists and those of similar persuasions... have ample justification in the doctrine of the Big Bang." He also predicted that the Big Bang "is unlikely to survive the decade ahead." <sup>6</sup> However, despite Maddox' hopes, Big Bang has gained credence and many discoveries have been made that prove the creation of the universe.

Some materialists have a relatively logical view of this matter. For example, the English materialist physicist, H.P. Lipson, unwillingly accepts the scientific fact of creation. He writes:

I think ...that we must...admit that the only acceptable explanation is creation. I know that this is anathema to physicists, as indeed it is to me, but we must not reject that we do not like if the experimental evidence supports it. <sup>7</sup>

Thus, the fact arrived at finally by modern astronomy is this: time and matter were brought into being by an eternally powerful Creator independent of both of them. The eternal power that created the universe in which we live is God who is the possessor of infinite might, knowledge and wisdom.

## **PHYSICS AND ASTRONOMY: THE COLLAPSE OF THE IDEA OF A RANDOM UNIVERSE AND THE DISCOVERY OF THE ANTHROPIC PRINCIPLE**

A second atheist dogma rendered invalid in the 20th century by discoveries in astronomy is the idea of a random universe. The view that the matter in the universe, the heavenly bodies and the laws that determine the relationships among them has no purpose but is the result of chance, has been dramatically discounted.

For the first time since the 1970's, scientists have begun to recognize the fact that the whole physical balance of the universe is adjusted delicately in favor of human life. With the advance of research, it has been discovered that the physical, chemical and biological laws of the universe, basic forces such as gravity and electro-magnetism, the structure of atoms and elements are all ordered exactly as they have to be for human life. Western scientists have called this extraordinary design the "**anthropic principle**". That is, every aspect of the universe is designed with a view to human life.

We may summarize the basics of the anthropic principle as follows:

✍ The speed of the first expansion of the universe (the force of the Big Bang explosion) was exactly the velocity that it had to be. According to scientists' calculations, if the expansion rate had differed from its actual value by more than one part in a billion billion, then the universe would either have recollapsed before it ever reached its present size or else have splattered in every direction in a way never to unite again. To put it another way, even at the first moment of the universe's existence there was a fine calculation of the accuracy of a billion billionth.

✍ The four physical forces in the universe (gravitational force, weak nuclear force, strong nuclear force, and electromagnetic force) are all at the necessary levels for an ordered universe to emerge and for life to exist. Even the tiniest variations in these forces (for example, one in  $10^{39}$ , or one in  $10^{28}$ ; that is—crudely calculated—one in a billion billion billion billion), the universe would either be composed only of radiation or of no other element besides hydrogen.

✍ There are many other delicate adjustments that make the earth ideal for human life: the size of the sun, its distance from the earth, the unique physical and chemical properties of water, the wavelength of the sun's rays, the way that the earth's atmosphere contains the gases necessary to allow respiration, or the Earth's magnetic field being ideally suited to human life. (For more information on this topic, see Harun Yahya, [The Creation of the Universe](#), Al-Attique Publishers, 2001)

This delicate balance is one of the most striking discoveries of modern astrophysics. The wellknown astronomer, Paul Davies, writes in the last paragraph of his book *The Cosmic Blueprint*, "The impression of Design is overwhelming."[8](#)

In an article in the journal *Nature*, the astrophysicist W. Press writes, "**there is a grand design in the Universe that favors the development of intelligent life.**"[9](#)

The interesting thing about this is that the majority of the scientists that have made these discoveries were of the materialist point of view and came to this conclusion unwillingly. They did not undertake their scientific investigations hoping to find a proof for God's existence. But most of them, if not all of them, despite their unwillingness, arrived at this conclusion as the only explanation for the extraordinary design of the universe.

In his book, *The Symbiotic Universe* the American astronomer, George Greenstein, acknowledges this fact:

How could this possibly have come to pass [that the laws of physics conform themselves to life]? ...As we survey all the evidence, the thought insistently arises that some supernatural agency—or, rather Agency—must be involved. Is it possible that suddenly, without intending to, we have stumbled upon scientific proof of the existence of a Supreme Being? Was it God who stepped in and so providentially crafted the cosmos for our benefit?[10](#)

By beginning his question with "Is it possible", Greenstein, an atheist, tries to ignore that plain fact that has confronted him. But many scientists who have approached the question without prejudice acknowledge that the universe has been created especially for human life. Materialism is now being viewed as an erroneous belief outside the realm of science. The American geneticist, Robert Griffiths, acknowledges this fact when he says, "If we need an atheist for a debate, I go to the philosophy department. The physics department isn't much use."[11](#)

In his book *Nature's Destiny: How the Laws of Biology Reveal Purpose in the Universe*, which examines how physical, chemical and biological laws are amazingly calculated in an "ideal" way with a view to the requirements of human life, the well-known molecular biologist, Michael Denton writes:

The new picture that has emerged in twentieth-century astronomy presents a dramatic challenge to the presumption which has been prevalent within scientific circles during most of the past four centuries: that life is a peripheral and purely contingent phenomenon in the cosmic scheme.[12](#)

In short, the idea of a random universe, perhaps atheism's most basic pillar, has been proved invalid. Scientists now openly speak of the collapse of materialism.[13](#) The supposition whose falsity God reveals in the Qur'an, "**We did not create heaven and earth and everything between them to no purpose. That is the opinion of those who disbelieve...**" (Qur'an, 38: 27) was shown to be invalid by science in the 1970's.

## QUANTUM PHYSICS AND THE DISCOVERY OF THE DIVINE WISDOM

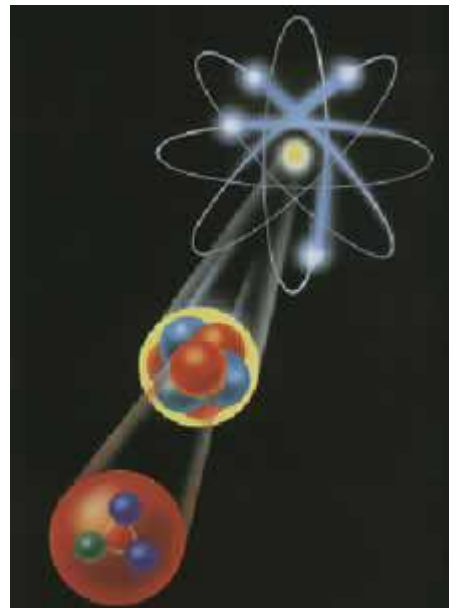
One of the areas of science that shatters the materialist myth and gives positive evidence for theism is quantum physics.

Quantum physics deals with the tiniest particles of matter, what is called the sub-atomic realm. In school everyone learns that matter is composed of atoms. Atoms are made up of a nucleus and several electrons spinning around it. One strange fact is that all these particles take up only some 0.0001 percent of the atoms. In other words, an atom is something that is 99.9999 percent "empty."

An even more interesting fact is that when the nuclei and electrons are further examined, it has been realized that these are made up of much smaller particles called "quarks," and that these quarks are not particles in the physical sense, but simply energy. This discovery has broken the classical distinction between matter and energy. It now appears that in the material universe, only energy exists. What we call matter is just "frozen energy."

There is a still more intriguing fact: The quarks, those energy packets, act in such a way that they maybe described as "conscious." Physicist Freeman Dyson, on his acceptance of the Templeton Prize, stated that:

Atoms are weird stuff, behaving like active agents rather than inert substances. They make unpredictable choices between alternative possibilities according to the laws of quantum mechanics. It appears that mind, as manifested by the capacity to make choices, is to some extent inherent in every atom.[14](#)



**When scientists have gone deeper into the atom, they found it shockingly "empty".**

What this means is that there is information behind matter. Information that precedes the material realm. Gerald Schroeder, an MIT-trained scientist who has worked in both physics and biology and author of the famous book *The Science of God*, makes a number of important comments on this subject. In his more recent book, *The Hidden Face of God: Science Reveals the Ultimate Truth* (2001), Schroeder explains that quantum physics—along with other branches of science—is the tool for discovering a universal wisdom that lies behind the material world. As he puts it:

It took humanity millennia before an Einstein discovered that, as bizarre as it may seem, the basis of matter is energy, that matter is actually condensed energy. It may take a while longer for us to discover that **there is some non-thing even more fundamental than energy that forms the basis of energy**, which in turn forms the basis of matter.[15](#)

John Archibald, professor of physics at Princeton University and recipient of the Einstein Award, explained the same fact when he said that the "bit" (the binary digit) of information gives rise to the "it," the substance of matter.[16](#) According to Schroeder this has a "profound meaning":

The matter/energy relationships, the quantum wave functions, have profound meaning. **Science may be approaching the realization that the entire universe is an expression of information, wisdom, an idea**, just as atoms are tangible expressions of something as ethereal as energy.[17](#)

This wisdom is such an omniscient thing that covers the whole universe:

**A single consciousness, a universal wisdom, pervades the universe.** The discoveries of science, those that search the quantum nature of subatomic matter, have moved us to the brink of a startling realization: **all existence is the expression of this wisdom.** In the laboratories we experience it as information that first physically articulated as energy and then condensed into the form of matter. Every particle, every being, from atom to human, appears to represent a level of information, of wisdom.[18](#)

This means that the material universe is not a purposeless and chaotic heap of atoms, as the atheist/materialist dogma assumes, but is instead a manifestation of a wisdom which existed before the universe and which has absolute sovereignty over everything that exists. In Schroeder's words, it is **"as if a metaphysical substrate was impressed upon the physical"**. [19](#)



This discovery shatters the whole materialist myth and reveals that the material universe we see is just a shadow of a transcendent Absolute Being. Thus, as Schroeder explains, quantum physics has become the point where science and theology meet:

The age-old theological view of the universe is that all existence is the manifestation of a transcendent wisdom, with a universal consciousness being its manifestation. **If I substitute the word information for wisdom, theology begins to sound like quantum physics.** We may be witnessing the scientific confluence of the physical with the spiritual. [20](#)

Quantum is really the point where science and theology meet. The fact that the whole universe is pervaded by a wisdom is a secret that was revealed in the Qur'an 14 centuries ago. One verse reads:

**Your god is God alone, there is no god but Him. He encompasses all things in His knowledge. (Qur'an, 20:98)**

## **THE NATURAL SCIENCES: THE COLLAPSE OF DARWINISM AND THE TRIUMPH OF INTELLIGENT DESIGN**

As we stated at the beginning, one of the main supports for the rise of atheism to its zenith in the 19<sup>th</sup> century was Darwin's theory of evolution. With its assertion that the origin of human beings and all other living things lay in unconscious natural mechanisms, Darwinism gave atheists the opportunity they had been seeking for centuries. Therefore, Darwin's theory had been adopted by the most passionate atheists of the time, and atheist thinkers such as Marx and Engels elucidated this theory as the basis of their philosophy. Since that time, the relationship between Darwinism and atheism has continued.

But, at the same time, this greatest support for atheism is the dogma that has received the greatest blow from scientific discoveries in the 20<sup>th</sup> century. The discoveries by various branches of science such as paleontology, biochemistry, anatomy and genetics have shattered the theory of evolution from various aspects. (See Harun Yahya, [Evolution Deceit](#), 2000). We have dealt with this fact in much more detail in various other books and publications, but we may summarize it here as follows:



**Darwin: His theory is now refuted by a great deal of scientific evidence.**

➤ **Paleontology:** Darwin's theory rests on the assumption that all species come from one single common ancestor and that they diverged from one another over a long period of time by small gradual changes. It is supposed that the proofs for this will be discovered in the fossil record, the petrified remains of living things. But fossil research conducted in the course of the 20<sup>th</sup> century has presented a totally different picture. The fossil of even a single undoubted intermediate species that would substantiate the belief in the gradual evolution of species has not been found. Moreover, every taxon appears suddenly in the fossil record and no trace has been found of any previous ancestors. The phenomenon known as the Cambrian Explosion is especially interesting. In this early geological period, nearly all of the phyla (major groups with significantly different body plans) of the animal kingdom suddenly appeared. This sudden emergence of many different categories of living things with totally different body structures and extremely complex organs and systems, including mollusks, arthropods, echinoderms and (as recently discovered) even vertebrates, is a major blow to Darwinism. For, as evolutionists also agree, the sudden appearance of a taxon implies supernatural design and this means creation.

➤ **Biological Observations:** In elaborating his theory, Darwin relied on examples of how animal breeders produced a different variety of dogs or horses. He extrapolated the limited changes he observed in these cases to the whole of the natural world and proposed that every living thing could have come to be in this way from a common ancestor. But Darwin made this claim in the 19<sup>th</sup> century when the level of scientific sophistication was low. In the 20<sup>th</sup> century things have changed greatly. Decades of observation and experimentation on various species of animals have shown that variation in living things has never gone beyond certain genetic boundary. Darwin's assertions, like "I can see no difficulty in a race of bears being rendered, by natural selection, more and more aquatic in their habits, with larger and larger mouths, till a creature was produced as monstrous as a whale."[21](#) actually demonstrates his great ignorance. On the other hand, observations and experiments have shown that mutations defined by Neo-Darwinism as an evolutionary mechanism add no new genetic information to living creatures.

➤ **The Origin of Life:** Darwin spoke about a common ancestor but he never mentioned how this first common ancestor came to be. His only conjecture was that the first cell could have formed as a result of random chemical reactions "in some small warm little pond".<sup>22</sup> But evolutionary biochemists who undertook to close this hole in Darwinism met with frustration. All observations and experiments showed that it was, in a word, impossible for a living cell to arise within inanimate matter by random chemical reactions. Even the English atheist Nobel Prize-winner Fred Hoyle expressed that such a scenario "is comparable with the chance that **a tornado sweeping through a junk-yard might assemble a Boeing 747 from the materials therein.**"<sup>23</sup>

➤ **Intelligent Design:** Scientists studying cells, the molecules that compose the cells, their remarkable organization within the body and the delicate order and plan in the organs are faced with proof of the fact that evolutionists strongly wish to reject: The world of living things is permeated by designs too complex to be found in any technological equipment. Intricate examples of design, including our eyes that are too superior to be compared to any camera, the wings of birds that have inspired flight technology, the complexly integrated system of the cells of living things and the remarkable information stored in DNA, have vitiated the theory of evolution which regards living things as the product of blind chance.

All these facts have squeezed Darwinism into a corner by the end of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Today, in the United States and other Western countries, the theory of intelligent design is gaining everincreasing acceptance among scientists. Those who defend the idea of intelligent design say that Darwinism has been a great error in the history of science and that it came to be as the result of materialist philosophy's being imposed on the scientific paradigm. Scientific discoveries show that there is a design in living things which proves creation. In short, science proves once more that God created all living things.

## PSYCHOLOGY: THE COLLAPSE OF FREUDIANISM AND THE ACCEPTANCE OF FAITH

The representative of the 19<sup>th</sup> century atheist dogma in the field of psychology was the Austrian psychiatrist Sigmund Freud. Freud proposed a psychological theory which rejected the existence of the soul and tried to explain the whole spiritual world of human beings in terms of sexual and similar hedonistic motivations. But Freud's greatest assault was against religion.

In his book *The Future of an Illusion* published in 1927, he proposed that religious faith was a kind of mental illness (neurosis) and that, as human beings progressed, religious faith would completely disappear. Due to the primitive scientific conditions of the time, the theory was proposed without the requisite research and investigation, and with no scholarly literature or possibility of comparison, and therefore, its claims were extremely deficient. Indeed, if Freud had the possibility of evaluating his propositions today, he would himself be surprised by the logical deficiency of his claims and he would be the first to criticize such senseless presuppositions.



**Later studies showed that Freud's ideas, especially the ones about religion were totally flawed.**

After Freud, psychology developed on an atheist foundation. Not only Freud, but the founders of other schools of psychology in the 20<sup>th</sup> century were passionate atheists. Two of these were B.F. Skinner, the founder of the behaviorist school and Albert Ellis, founder of rational emotive therapy. The world of psychology ended up by becoming the forum for atheism. A 1972 poll among the members of the American Psychology Association revealed that only 1.1 percent of psychologists in the country had any religious beliefs.<sup>24</sup>

But most psychologists who fell into this great deception were undone by their own psychological investigations. It became known that the basic suppositions of Freudianism had almost no scientific support and, moreover, that religion was not a mental illness as Freud and some other psychological theorists declared, but a basic element of mental health. Patrick Glynn summarizes these important developments:

Yet the last quarter of the twentieth century has not been kind to the psychoanalytic vision. Most significant has been **the exposure of Freud's views of religion as entirely fallacious.** Ironically enough, scientific research in psychology over the past twenty-five years has demonstrated that, far from being a neurosis or source of neuroses as Freud and his disciples claimed, religious belief is one of the most consistent correlates of overall mental health and happiness. Study after study has shown a

powerful relationship between religious belief and practice, on the one hand, and healthy behaviors with regard to such problems as suicide, alcohol and drug abuse, divorce, depression, even, perhaps surprisingly, levels of sexual satisfaction in marriage, on the other. In short, the empirical data run exactly contrary to the supposedly “scientific” consensus of the psychotherapeutic profession.<sup>[25](#)</sup>

Finally, as Glynn says, “modern psychology at the close of the twentieth century seems to be reacquainting itself with religion”<sup>[26](#)</sup> and “a purely secular view of human mental life has been shown to fail not just at the theoretical, but also at the practical, level.”<sup>[27](#)</sup>

In other words, atheism has been routed also on the field of psychology.

## MEDICINE: THE DISCOVERY OF "HOW HEARTS FIND PEACE"

Another branch of science that was affected by the collapse of atheist suppositions was medicine.

According to results compiled by David B. Larson and his team at the National Institute for Healthcare Research, a comparison among Americans in relation to church attendance yielded very interesting results. Risk of arteriosclerotic heart disease for men who attended church frequently was just 60 percent of that for men who were infrequent church attenders. Among women, suicide was twice as high among infrequent as among frequent church attenders; smokers who ranked religion as very important in their lives were over seven times less likely to have normal diastolic pressure readings than were those who did not.<sup>[28](#)</sup>

Secular psychologists generally explain such phenomena as having a psychological cause. In this sense, faith raises a person's morale and contributes to his well-being. There may be some truth in this explanation, but if we look more closely we see something much more dramatic. Belief in God is much stronger than any other influence on the morale. In comprehensive research on the relationship between religious belief and physical health, Dr. Herbert Benson of the Harvard Medical School came up with some interesting results. Although he did not have any religious faith, Benson arrived at the result that faith in God and worship had a much more positive effect on human health than could be observed in anything else. Benson concludes that he has **“found that faith quiets the mind like no other form of belief.”**<sup>[29](#)</sup>

Why is there such a special relation between faith and human spirit and body? The result arrived at by Benson, who is a secular researcher, was, as he put it, that the human mind and body are “wired for God.”<sup>[30](#)</sup>

This fact, that the medical world is slowly beginning to notice, is a secret revealed in the Qur'an with the verse, **“Only in the remembrance of God can the heart find peace.”** (Qur'an, 13:28) The reason why those who believe in God, pray to Him and trust in Him are physically and mentally more healthy than others is that they behave in harmony with their nature. Philosophical systems opposed to human nature always bring pain, sorrow, anxiety and depression upon people.

The basic source of the peace experienced by a religious person is that he acts in order to gain God's approval. In other words, this peace is the natural result of a person's listening to the voice of his conscience. A person does not live the morality of religion simply “to be more at peace” or “to be healthier”; a person who acts with this intention cannot find peace in its true sense. God well knows that what a person stores in his heart or what he reveals. A person experiences peace of mind only by being sincere and attempting to gain God's approval. God commands:

**So set your face firmly towards the [true] religion, as a pure natural believer, God's natural pattern on which He made mankind. There is no changing God's creation. That is the true religion—but most people do not know it. (Qur'an, 30:30)**

In the light of the discoveries that we have briefly indicated above, modern medicine is starting to become cognizant of this truth. As Patrick Glynn says, “contemporary medicine is clearly moving in the direction of acknowledging dimensions of healing beyond the purely material.”<sup>[31](#)</sup>

## SOCIETY: THE FALL OF COMMUNISM, FASCISM AND THE HIPPIE DREAM



The collapse of atheism in the 20<sup>th</sup> century did not occur only in the fields of astrophysics, biology, psychology and medicine; it happened also in politics and social morality.

Communism may be considered the most important political result of 19<sup>th</sup> century atheism. The founders of this ideology, Marx, Engels, Lenin, Trotsky or Mao, all adopted atheism as a basic principle. A primary goal of all communist regimes was to get society to adopt atheism and to destroy religious belief. Stalin's Russia, Red China, Cambodia, Albania and some Eastern block countries applied immense pressure on religious people to the point of committing mass murder.

Yet, amazingly, at the end of the 1980s this bloody atheist system collapsed. When we examine the reasons for this dramatic fall, we see that what collapsed was actually atheism. Patrick Glynn writes:

To be sure, secular historians would say that the greatest mistake of Communism was to attempt to defy the laws of economics. But other laws, too, came into play... Moreover, as historians penetrate the circumstances of the Communist collapse, it is becoming clearer that **the Soviet elite was itself in the throes of an atheistic "crisis of faith"**. Having lived under an atheistic ideology—one that consisted of lies and that was based on a "Big Lie"—the Soviet system suffered a radical demoralization, in every sense of that term. People, including the ruling elite, lost all sense of morality and all sense of hope.[32](#)

An interesting indication of the Soviet system's great "crisis of faith" was President Mihail Gorbachev's attempts of reform. Since the time that he assumed the presidency, Gorbachev was interested in moral problems as well as economic reforms. For example, one of the first things he did was to initiate a campaign against alcoholism. In order to raise the morale of society, for a long time he used Marxist-Leninist terminology but he saw that this was of no use.

Then, in the later years of the regime, he even began to mention God in some of his speeches, even though he himself was an atheist. Naturally, these insincere words of faith were of no use and the crisis of faith in Soviet society continued to worsen. The result was the collapse of the gigantic Soviet empire. The 20<sup>th</sup> century documented not only the fall of communism, but also that of another fruit of 19<sup>th</sup> century antireligious philosophy—fascism. Fascism is the outcome of a philosophy which may be called a mixture of atheism and paganism and which is intensely hostile to theistic religions. Friedrich Nietzsche, who may be called the father of fascism, extolled the morality of barbarous idolatrous societies, attacked Christianity and other monotheistic religions and even called himself the "Antichrist." Nietzsche's disciple, Martin Heidegger, was an avid Nazi supporter and the ideas of these two atheist thinkers gave impetus to the terrifying savagery of Nazi Germany. (The Holocaust, one of the greatest act of evil in human history, was the result of Nazi anti-Semitism, an ideology that hated Jews and the monotheistic faith that has been the cornerstone of Judaism—and also Islam.) The Second World War, that caused the death of 55 million people, is another example of the calamity that atheist ideologies like fascism and communism have brought upon humanity.



**Gorbachev: His futile attempts could not heal the "crisis of faith" in the Soviet society.**

At this point, we must recall another atheist ideology—**Social Darwinism**—which was among the causes for the outbreak of both the First and the Second World Wars. In his book entitled *Europe Since 1870*, Harvard history professor James Joll states that behind each of the two world wars lay the philosophical views of Social Darwinist European leaders who believed in the myth that war was a biological necessity and that nations developed through conflict.[33](#)

Another social consequence of atheism in the 20<sup>th</sup> century appeared in Western democracies. In the present day there is a tendency to regard the West as the “Christian world.” However, since the 19<sup>th</sup> century, a quickly growing atheist culture has held sway with Christian culture, and today there is a conflict between these two cultures in what we call Western civilization. And this atheist element has been the true cause of western imperialism, moral degeneration, despotism and other negative manifestations.

In his book *God: The Evidence*, the American writer Patrick Glynn draws attention to this matter and, in order to compare the God-fearing and atheist elements in the West, he takes the examples of the American and French Revolutions. The American Revolution was carried out by believers; American Declaration of Independence states that all men “are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable rights”. Since the French Revolution was the work of atheists, the French Declaration of Human Rights was very different, with no reference to God and full of atheist and neo-pagan notions.

The actual results of the two revolutions were quite different: in the American model, a peaceful, tolerant environment was created that respected religion and religious belief; in France the fierce hostility to religion drowned the country in blood and unleashed a savagery such as had never been seen before. As Glynn says, **“there is an interesting historical correlation between atheism, on the one hand, and moral and political catastrophe, on the other hand.”**<sup>34</sup>



**In contrast with the theist and peaceful American Revolution, the French Revolution was atheist, neo-pagan and extremely violent.**

Glynn notes that attempts to turn America into an atheist country have also caused harm to society. The fact that the sexual revolution (for example) that spread in the 60's and 70's caused immense social damage is accepted even by secular historians.<sup>35</sup>

The hippie movement was a demonstration of this social damage. The hippies believed that they could find spiritual emancipation through secular humanist philosophy and by such things as unlimited drugs and sex. These young people who poured onto the streets with romantic songs—like John Lennon's *Imagine* in which he spoke of a world “with no countries, and no religion too”—were actually undergoing a mass deception.

**In fact, a world without religion actually brought them to an unhappy end. The hippy leaders of the 1960s either killed themselves or died from drug-induced comas** in the early 1970s. Many other young hippies shared a similar fate.

Those young people of the same generation who turned to violence found themselves on the receiving end of violence. The 1968 generation, who turned their backs on God and religion and imagined they could find salvation in such concepts as revolution or selfish Epicureanism, ruined both themselves and their own societies.



**John Lennon: The world he imagined —one without religion— did not bring a happy end, neither to him nor to his followers.**

## THE DAWN OF THE POST-ATHEIST WORLD

The facts that we have briefly summarized to this point shows clearly that atheism is undergoing an inevitable collapse. In other words, humanity is — and will be — turning towards God. The truth of this assertion is not limited only to the scientific and political areas that we have written about here. From prominent statesmen to movie stars and pop artists, those who influence opinion in the West are much more religious than they used to be. There are many people who have seen the truth and come to believe in God after having lived for years as atheists. (Patrick Glynn from whose book we have quoted is one of these ex-atheists).

The fact that the developments which have contributed to this result began in the same period, that is from the second half of the 1970s, is quite interesting. The anthropic principle first appeared in the 1970s. Scientific criticism of Darwinism started to be loudly voiced at that same time. The turning point against the atheist dogma of Freud was a book entitled *The Road Less Traveled* published in 1978 by Scott Peck. For this reason, Glynn, in the 1997 edition of his book writes that "over the past twenty years, a significant body of evidence has emerged, shattering the foundations of the long-dominant modern secular worldview."[36](#)

Surely, the fact that the atheist world-view has been shaken means that another world-view prevails, which is belief in God. Since the end of the 1970's, (or, from the beginning of the 14<sup>th</sup> century according to the Muslim calendar) the world has seen a rise in religious values. Like other social processes, this does not happen in a day and the majority of people may not notice it because it has been developing over a long period of time. However, those who evaluate the development a little more carefully see that the world is at a major turning point in the realm of ideas.

Secular historians try to explain this process according to their own principles but just as they are in deep error with regard to the existence of God, so they are greatly mistaken about the course of history. In fact, as the following verse reveals, history moves as God as determined: "...**You will not find any changing in the pattern of God. You will not find any alteration in the pattern of God.**" (Qur'an, 35: 43) It follows, then, that history has a purpose and unfolds as God has commanded. And God's command is the perfection of His light:

**They desire to extinguish God's Light with their mouths. But God refuses to do other than perfect His Light, even though the disbelievers detest it. (Qur'an, 9: 32)**

This verse means that God has sent down His light upon humanity through the religion that He has revealed. Those who do not believe want to extinguish this light by their "mouths"—intimations, propaganda and philosophies, but God will finally perfect His light and give dominion to religious values on earth.

This may be the "turning point in history" mentioned at the beginning of this article as also indicated by the evidence we have provided here, as well as the implications of various hadiths and statements by scholars. Surely, God knows best.

## CONCLUSION

We are living at an important time. Atheism, which people have tried for hundreds of years to portray as "the way of reason and science," is proving to be mere irrationality and ignorance. Materialist philosophy that sought to use science for its own ends has been in turn defeated by science. A world rescuing itself from atheism will turn to God and religion. And this process has begun long ago.

It is clear that believers have important duties in this period. They must be aware of this major change in the world's way of thinking, interpret it, make good use of the opportunities that globalization offers and effectively represent the truth along this road. They must know that the basic conflict of ideas in the world is between atheism and faith. It is not a struggle between East and West; in both East and West there are those who believe in God and those who do not. For this reason, faithful Christians, as well as faithful Jews are allies of Muslims. The main divergence is not between Muslims and the "People of the Book" (Jews and Christians), but between Muslims and the People of the Book on the one hand, and atheists and pagans on the other. Of course, we must not show hostility to such people but view them as people who need to be rescued from their error.

The time is fast approaching when many people who are living in ignorance with no knowledge of their Creator will be graced by faith in the impending post-atheist world.

Harun Yahya

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