

Born that Way

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Thanks to...

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Most of us still think there's a god.

Well, okay, maybe that's not really a problem.

We still think it's an all-wise and all-good god.

We pray to this god.

But he's omniscient — he already knows what we're going to say.

And it's not like we're going to change his mind: Hey, Supreme Being and Ruler of the Universe — this is what *I* think should happen here.

Besides which, there's something fundamentally wrong with prayer.

It doesn't work.

Most people figure either God exists or he doesn't. But there are other possibilities.

Maybe he used to exist, but he doesn't anymore. Maybe he got run over by a truck or something.

Or maybe he does exist, but he's abandoned us. We may have been a disappointment. Or an infectious disease. Maybe he inherited us. Or got us for Christmas. And he's still trying to give us back. Or exchange us.

Or maybe he exists, but he went on holiday and got lost because, like one of his favourite sons who took the forty-year desert tour, he doesn't know how to stop and ask for directions.

A neuropsychologist, Michael A. Persinger, has discovered that when certain parts of the brain are stimulated with a small electrical current, 'god experiences' occur: people report feeling a divine presence and hearing God's voice. Surely that's proof that so-called religious experiences are just biochemical burps.

Either that or God's just messin' with us.

Ever wonder why he doesn't just once and for all provide conclusive evidence that he exists? Something simple and yet — godly.

Nothing weird like throwing chunks of bread at us.

Pascal figured that if there is a god and a heaven, and you *don't* believe, you don't get in; but if there isn't a god or a heaven, and you *do* believe, well, nothing of it. So it's a safer bet to believe that God exists.

Okay, but what if there *is* a god and heaven's only for those smart enough to recognize there's no proof that he exists?

In any case, I don't think they should give drivers' licenses to people who believe in life after death.

Krishna, an ancient god, was born of a virgin twelve hundred years before Jesus Christ. He was visited by wise men at his birth, he performed miracles, and he was crucified.

Mithra, another ancient god, was also born of a virgin, on December 25, six hundred years before Christ. He was visited by wise men at his birth,

and his first followers were shepherds (he had twelve in particular). He was crucified, and then he ascended into heaven.

Buddha too was born of a virgin, six hundred years before Christ. He too performed miracles and was crucified; he descended into Hades for three days, and then ascended into heaven.

Quexalcote, another god, was also born of a virgin, five hundred and eighty-seven years before Christ. He spent forty days fasting and resisting temptation, was crucified, along with two thieves, and was resurrected three days later.

Indra, yet another god, was born of a virgin, walked on water, was crucified, and then ascended into heaven.

Now, is all that just coincidence or what?

And about this so-called 'intelligent design'.

Tornadoes don't have guidance systems, we don't have earlids, and pain hurts more than it needs to.

But, well, God works in mysterious ways.

Why is that again?

The state motto of Ohio is "With God, all things are possible."

Oh yeah? Is it possible for him to create a rock so heavy he can't lift it?

*The Bible* continues to appear on bestseller lists even though the plot is confusing, the characters are unlikeable, the dialogue, unrealistic, and the tone, juvenile.

And much of it is just fucking incoherent. "Wherefore my sentence is, that we trouble not them, which from among the Gentiles are turned to God" (Acts 15:19). What the hell does that even *mean*?

Many people blame Eve for disobeying God and eating the apple. But how could she have known that was wrong? The apple was from the tree of the *knowledge* of good and evil — so until she ate it, she didn't know right from wrong!

And anyway, why did God forbid knowledge of good and evil? Could it be he didn't want us to know what an evil messed up sonuvabitch he was? Given that he proceeded to order mass murders left, right, and center — the Hittites, the Girgashites, the Amorites, the Canaanites, the Perizzites, the Hivites, the Jebusites, and the entire cities of Makkadah, Libnah, Lachish, Gezer, Eglon, and Hebron — and we *still* think he's overflowing with love and kindness, well, he obviously didn't have anything to worry about.

In any case, because of this knowledge of good and evil thing, we're born sinners.

So what, blessed are the psychopaths?

And this notion of being born in a state of 'original sin' — just by being born, you're bringing sin into the world —

Sort of puts abortion in a *good* light, doesn't it?

Who was Cain's wife? I mean, if it was Eve, then we're the result of inbreeding all the way back — which, now that I think of it, explains a lot.

And if it was someone else — *who created her?*

The Great Flood? Noah and all that? According to *The Bible*, the water rose 15 cubits and covered the mountains (Gen 7:20).

One cubit is about a foot and a half, so 15 cubits would be about 25 feet.

Those are some awfully high mountains.

(And *our* god created those?)

I've been reading some of the war stories in *The Bible* and apparently some guy named Adino killed 800 men in a single battle, and Abishai and Jashobeam each killed 300 (2 Sam 23:8,18; 1 Chr 11:11). Who were these guys? I mean, even if that single battle lasted a full 24 hours, that's at least 12 killed per hour — which is one guy every five minutes. Now I've never killed a person, with just knives and swords and shit, but it can't be that easy. One guy every five minutes for 24 hours straight?

In another battle, the Israelites killed 120,000 people in one day. During World War II, the Germans, along with the allied forces, using heavy tanks, artillery, mortars, machine guns, hand grenades, landmines, fighter planes, and bombs, managed to kill only 176,000 people over a period of six weeks.

So inquiring minds have to ask: when these guys went fishing, did they ever catch anything? Yeah? How big?

In addition to the forementioned, according to Biblical accounts, God commanded the deaths of 185,000 Assyrians, 120,000 Midianites, 120,000 Judeans, 100,000 Syrians, 24,000 Israelites, and 10,000 Moabites.

He's obviously rounding off to the nearest thousand, and I have to tell you, that lack of attention to detail bothers me.

Here's the Biblical Guide to Finding that Special Someone:

Find an attractive prisoner of war, take her home, shave her head, trim her nails, and give her new clothes. Then she's yours. (Deut 21:11-13)

When you see someone you like, go home and tell your parents to get her for you. (Judg 14:2).

Go to a party and hide. When the women come out to dance, grab one and carry her off to be your wife. (Judg 21; 19-25)

Find a man with several daughters and impress him by watering his flock. Or cutting off the foreskins of two hundred of his enemies. (Ex 2:16-21; 1 Sam 18:27)

Their infants shall be dashed in pieces, and their women with child shall be ripped up (Hos 13:16).

Happy shall he be, that taketh and dasheth thy little ones against the stones (Ps 137:9).

They shall have no pity on the fruit of the womb (Isa 13:18).

Dash their children, and rip up their women with child (2 Kgs 8:12).

Thou shalt eat the fruit of thine own body (Deut 28:53).



So I guess he's not really Pro-Life then, is he.

And O Creator of Everything, how can you not once even *mention* DNA?  
(Not in Genesis, not in Revelation...)

I used to be pissed because none of the disciples were women. Then I realized what a sorry lot of gullible schmucks they were, traipsing along after a total stranger, leaving at a moment's notice their families and their jobs — "Hey, come follow me! I'm God! No, really! Look — there, I've made a bush burn!"

Thou shalt not kill. (Ex 20:13) Put every man his sword by his side and slay his brother, companion, and neighbour. (Ex 32:27)

Thou shalt not make any likeness of anything that is in heaven. (Ex 20:4)  
Thou shalt make two cherubims of gold. (Ex 25:18)

For by grace are ye saved through faith, not by works. (Eph 2:8,9) By works a man is justified, and not by faith. (Jas 2:24)

I am a jealous God visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generations. (Ex 20:5) The son shall not bear the iniquity of the father. (Ezek 18:20)

Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you. (Jn 14:27) Think not that I am come to send peace on earth. (Mt 10:34)

Submit yourself to every ordinance of man. (1 Pet 2:13) We ought to obey God rather than men. (Acts 5:29)

Looks like they're right — he *does* transcend the rules of logic.

Or maybe he just changes his mind a lot.

Every moving thing that liveth shall be meat for you (Gen 9:3); no, wait, ye shall not eat of them that chew the cud or of them that divide the cloven hoof (Deut 14:7).

I am merciful, and I will not keep anger forever (Jer 3:12). Ye have kindled a fire in mine anger, which shall burn forever (Jer 17:4). Well, which is it?

Or could be he's just wrong a lot.

He said that Adam would die on the day he ate the apple (Gen 2:16,17), but he didn't (Gen 3:17; Gen 5:3).

He told Jehoiakim that he wouldn't have a son (Jer 36:30), but he did (2 Kgs 24:6).

Or maybe he just lies a lot.

He promised Jacob that he would return from Egypt (Gen 46:3,4), but he didn't — he died there (Gen 49).

They shall seek me early, but they shall not find me (Prov 1:28); nope, I lied — these that seek me early *shall* find me (Prov 8:17).

Whatever, "God said so!" doesn't mean dick-all, does it?

Chapter 28 of Deuteronomy says that if we don't hearken unto God's voice, he's going to smite us with consumption, fever, inflammation, burning, hemorrhoids, the scab, the itch, and the botch of Egypt.

The botch of Egypt?

And God created us in his image.

Speaking of creation, if God made everything, who made God?

If he just *always was*, then why couldn't it be that everything else just *always was*?

And if he *made himself*, well, I guess that means he *can* go fuck himself!

Speaking of which, the Pope says that if a man with HIV can't abstain from intercourse, it's better that he infect his wife than use a condom.

And I say that if a woman with PMS can't resist a rage, it's better that she gun down the Pope than take a Midol.

Anti-gun law advocate and pastor of the New Life Christian Fellowship, Herbert Kershaw, accidentally shot himself to death while demonstrating gun safety to his family.

I think it's time for some new reps.

President Bush keeps talking about his "personal relationship with Jesus."

Which is odd, because the last time I talked to Jesus — yesterday — he said he didn't know him.

Ever notice how similar religion and sex are?

They both promise transcendence, ecstasy. (They both fail to deliver, but that's another point.)

They both involve salvation: one looks to God like one does to a lover, for redemption. (Again, they both — never mind.)

They both involve a little sadomasochism, a little bondage and discipline: more than one saint has submitted to flagellation, and isn't every monk given a hairshirt and every nun her own little whip?

And of course, to kneel in prostration is to put one's ass in the air — I'm ready, enter me, Oh Great One.

Speaking of which, it seems to me God's a little obsessed with sex — there are so many stories in *The Bible* of rape, incest, whoring, lust, coveting thy neighbour's wife, deflowering virgins ...

He's also a little obsessed with food — what to eat, when to eat ...

Guess that's what happens when you're non-corporeal.

I read the other day that Vision TV, a religious network, won't accept ads for alcoholic beverages or feminine hygiene products.

Well that makes sense: I mean, we all know what a good buzz you can get from a tampon.

People give \$80 million a day to God. \$80 million a day!

Just what the fuck has he been doing with all that money?

And when do you think he'll start paying taxes for roads, schools, hospitals, and stuff?

Those people who become 'born again' — I guess that's *one* way to avoid growing up.

Why did the guardian angel cross the road?

To be with his imaginary friend.

Studies have shown that people who go to church are happier than those who do not.

Okay, and people who take Prozac are happier still.

Speaking of which, apparently a bunch of people looked up at the sky one day and saw the clouds shaped into a happy face. They said it was a sign from God.

What it was a sign *of*, they didn't say.

Studies have also shown that religion doesn't much determine whether or not people will be good Samaritans.

The weather does.

I was talking to some non-practising Catholics the other day.

Told them I was a non-practising saint.

A church group at the University of Texas is promoting Christian faith as the best way to avoid abduction by aliens.

Well yeah. Any aliens that come here won't be *that* stupid.

(Then again, any aliens that come *here* — )

I was in the store the other day and I sneezed, and someone called out cheerfully, "Bless you!"

Good thing. I'd hate to lose my soul out my nose. I'm glad God's available to see to that.

Have you seen those lawn signs? "A Christian Family lives here. We have kept the Christ in Christmas."

And missed the sermon on pride.

And did you hear about that Amish kid who got caught reading porn?

He parents confiscated his entire collection of *Car & Driver* and *Popular Mechanics*.

Isn't it interesting that the people who talk the loudest about family values are the ones who worship a dead-beat dad? I mean look, he left a couple thousand years ago. Said he'd be back real soon. Yeah right. "Wait 'till your father gets home." *That* got tired real quick. He never writes. He never calls. Child support? "Cheque's in the mail." Sure. Tell that to Africa.

You know how when there's a train wreck or something, survivors often attribute their good fortune to God — they walk around saying "It's a miracle! Praise the Lord!"

That happened to me once. I was driving back from a business meeting with my pompous little shit of a supervisor and we got into a three-car pile-up. He was killed instantly and I said the same thing — "It's a miracle! Praise the Lord!"

Speaking of miracles, God can walk on water? We can race across it at a hundred miles an hour.

He can rise up to the clouds? Hell, we've been to the moon and back.

He can heal the sick? We can make them sick in the first place and *then* heal them.

He fed 5,000 people with just five loaves of bread? What, no fries with that?

He transformed water into wine? Check out what we've done with the Great Lakes.

The virgin birth? Duh. We *invented* the turkey baster.

He can resurrect the dead? Well that's just gross.

Investigators of yet another stigmata 'miracle' — blood seeping from the wounds of a crucified Christ figure — discovered that the red stuff was indeed genuine human blood.

Wouldn't that cast *doubt* on the 'son of a *god*' thing?

You know, we keep hearing that atheists are godless heathens gonna burn in hell. But it wasn't atheists who submitted a good number of people to assorted tortures during the Inquisition. It wasn't atheists who burned at the stake women suspected of flying through the air and having sex with Satan (not necessarily in that order). It wasn't atheists who herded Jews and Gypsies into boxcars during the German holocaust. It wasn't atheists in white sheets leading the lynch mobs. It wasn't atheists bombing abortion clinics and gay nightclubs. And it's not atheists hijacking planes and flying them into tall buildings full of people.

Singing "Here Comes Santa Claus" during the Lord's Prayer at City Council? Okay, yeah, that was us.



By the way, I don't understand all the anger about discontinuing 'The Prayer' in schools, courtrooms, council meetings, and other public places. We're not trying to stop you from praying wherever and whenever you want — we'd just rather you not be such an exhibitionist about it.

Did you hear about that guy who sued God? Maybe he lives in California and he suffered one too many 'Acts of God,' I don't know, but I thought he had a pretty good case.

What would be his defence? 'I didn't know'? There goes omniscience. 'I couldn't do anything'? There goes omnipotence. 'I really just didn't give a fuck'? There goes omnibeneficence.

My guess is he won't show. There goes existence.

And yet ... a recent poll found that almost 80% of North Americans are Christian.

They say they were born that way.