

# Bedrock

## Finding A Foundation For Faith

by David Morsey

### INTRODUCTION

In the 3rd century B.C., Archimedes, famed Greek mathematician, uttered a sentence that has had substantive interest to the present hour. He said, "Give me a long enough pole and a place to stand and I'll move the earth." (or words to that effect). For all of his sojourn on the earth man has been looking for a place to stand in the vastness of the universe. What hope does he have? But it is the very crucial nature of the question that causes the uncertainty and the unwillingness to settle for something less than absolute. The atheist does not wish to put his weight on a cloud. The spiritist does not wish to put his weight on a mere chimera. The materialist does not want a spectral voice in the night.

### THE SEARCH FOR REALITY

By and large everyone is looking for reality. It is often referred to as truth, and yet we must see a distinction between truth and reality. The word "truth" in the New Testament translates a Greek word –*aletheia*– which means that which is real or genuine. However, truth is not a good counterpart to reality. Truth is merely the articulation of reality. It is only a human attempt to describe reality. And that is why there is so much controversy over the matter of truth. People are inclined to say, "We have the truth," when in reality they have only their own assumptions about reality. Whether or not their assumptions are true depends on the capacity of the individual to describe the reality. Christ could of course say –"I am the truth," but He was really saying more than that –He was saying I am "reality" For Christians, Christ is whatever is real in the universe. For humans even to claim that they have the truth about Christ depends upon their own capacity to discuss Him.

Nevertheless the search goes on. People want to know. Who is Christ? Basically who is God? Will we find Him? How do we know we are on the right track? How do we know that what we have found is not merely a figment of our own imagination? It is thus that the battle rages over reality.

### THE FABRICATION OF GOD

There are many honest seekers after truth who really want to know. On the other hand there are a great many who would simply like to dismiss God from the picture and proceed along their own independent lines. Fabricating one's own God is certainly convenient if not too secure. Fabricating life without God is even more so. But one must be sympathetic with the search, from whatever quarter it comes. The very reluctance to pursue God is itself a mark of the human predicament. If humans had wanted to know God that much they might have had a different attitude in the ill-fated Garden of Eden.

So now given the human situation, we are confronted with a certain degree of judicial blindness that threatens to close the connection to all but a limited number.

### THE DIVINE DIMENSION

To know God is not a simple thing like knowing other people. In the first place He is identified in a different realm and with different qualities than the human person. When we try to describe God as eternal, we are usually thinking about longevity and about the human capacity to be without end. However, the eternity of God has to do with a much deeper realm of time and space. In fact we are really dealing with timelessness and spacelessness. So how does a human cope with that? We are really dealing with depths of existence that cut across all the lines of time and space. Time is relative in God's economy. Yesterday is the same as tomorrow and tomorrow is the same as yesterday. So how does one prove God within the human context with those kinds of attributes? The pursuit of God thus becomes impossible on the standard human continuum. But to discuss God on the basis that He always was, always is and always will be completely misses the basic point. In God's process or economy for example prayer can be retroactive. That is, we can be praying for something that would have belonged in a different time zone and yet as far as God is concerned it was a viable potential in the past. "I should have prayed for that six months ago." But of course He knew I should have prayed for it then and Himself became involved in it at that time. He functions within the context of eternity, and humans don't really have the basic capacity to know what that means. To prove God under these conditions is an impossible task for mere finite minds.

### PROOFS IN THE DIVINE DIMENSION

So now we turn to the task of the pursuit of God with the understanding that we are completely out of the human realm of proof. So then the question is how are we ever going to get involved in any kind of viable proof for God? Before we take up our task we must realize that it must be done with great sensitivity and sympathy for the human effort to get hold of God. There are various categories or classifications in which the idea of God is brought into focus. And here we must be very open and understanding.

### THE MATERIALIST

The first category might be regarded as materialism. In looking for a place to stand one is tempted by Bedrock, because it offers something very solid. But is it really all that solid? After all, the whole world of matter is made up of minute particles identified as sub-microscopic and having no solid connection. If we could magnify matter enough, we would find that it had a great deal of space in between each particle. It would hardly be something we could find as a footing. Matter is not an adequate foundation. We talked previously about reality. In discussing reality we were not thinking in terms of something that is visible only by touch, feel or smell. We were talking about whatever it is out there in the universe that might be identified as real—whether it be solid or not. The atheist is simply seeking something solid. He wants something that is not a fabrication of his own mind. He can hardly be blamed for that. We must thus be sympathetic with all seekers after reality, whether of our persuasion or not. You may not agree with them, but, after all,

they have a right to their own pursuit. Is the atheist right or wrong? At this point we're not saying. But he has a right to his opinion.

One of the problems that the atheist faces is that in order to say blanketly that there is no God, one would have to have been everywhere in the universe to make such a statement. On the other hand if one says I believe that there is a God, he would only have had to find something viable to him in his own corner of the world. There is a vast difference between saying I know that there is no God and saying that I don't know whether or not there is a God. This is, of course, a position of the agnostic who is unwilling to say at this point. But of course the atheist must be given his due as well, whether or not we agree with him.

The atheist or non-theist, as I prefer, is a very broad category and usually the result of disappointments in the pursuit of God from other quarters. The school often becomes a deterrent to belief in God as people are presented with unrealistic alternatives and inadequate answers to their questions. In all events, the atheist must be treated with respectability as having a right to philosophical views, which are his own, if not in keeping with ours.

### THE RELIGIONIST

The broadest category among humans by far is the pursuit of God with the hope that He is available. Where such an effort is often met with skepticism, it is nevertheless by far the most universal position. From an anthropological point of view, there is no ethnic group in the world that does not have some kind of a universal belief in a deity of their own historic making. These would fall under the general category of the religionists. The difference between philosophy and religion is that philosophy is what one believes, while religion is what one believes enough to establish patterns of behavior by it. The atheist is understandably skeptical because he sees these patterns of behavior as having historical fabrication. People have believed these things for centuries and established a culture around them.

There is usually, of course, a religious handbook or an oral tradition which becomes the guidepost for their beliefs and practices. It is the assumption on the part of the culture that these handbooks or guideposts were established by their deity and handed down from generation to generation that gives credence to different forms of belief. The atheist is understandably skeptical about this, especially in view of the fact that there are a great many such handbooks making a great many similar claims. The effort on the part of the particular religious group to prove that their own handbook is more valid than any one else's, is bound to meet with similar skepticism. How does one actually bridge the gap between the actual "voice from God" and a human assumption about a voice from God? Once again we have an understandable skepticism, right or wrong.

### THE REVELATIONALIST

It comes now to revelationists, who base their entire structure upon the miraculous, which of course no one can absolutely deny, given the personal element that accompanies the so-called revelation. Did God actually speak to such a one? How does one know? Did God actually speak to the prophets and apostles of the Bible? Again, how does one know, for sure?

At this point, of course, the miraculous is summoned. In the relating of a series of unusual circumstances, one hopes to demonstrate indeed there was providential help. Once again the fundamental question confronts us –how do we know? Did the Lord really appear to such a one? Was there an actual healing that took place? One's entire belief in God depends upon events that may or may not have taken place. It is hardly strange that outsiders who did not participate in these events should be skeptical.

The bottom line of this entire discussion is that in the search for the divine or the supernatural or the deity, we must be sympathetic with those who have not found faith in the deity readily available. Of course, the other extreme, which is to say that God does not exist, is a reaction not justified by the reality of the fact that no one has ever encompassed the entire universe to make such a statement.

So then where do we find this deity? It is not that the atheist must be judged to be absolutely wrong, but rather understood as having a case in the enigmatic pursuit of God.

We have been dealing with the religionist as one who has been engaged in fabricating a case for God from his own revelational literature. But, of course, the revelationist declares that his literature is correct and that those who shun it, do so out of ignorance or hard-heartedness or both.

## THE SUPERNATURALIST

And then there is the supernaturalist whose case for God depends on a miraculous intervention.

The entire discussion of the atheist was not so much to build a case for atheism as to show the viable realities of the atheistic implications in the pursuit of God. If one has been brought up in a context of atheism it comes rather naturally since there has been no substantive case for any other position. In fact, one has been more or less indifferent to alternative views with which one has not been especially confronted.

But it is just as natural for the revelationist to slip into a mode of revelation as for the atheist to slip into a mode of atheism. If one has been brought up within a certain cultural context, it is hardly surprising that one remains within that context. The rigidity with which one holds ones views will depend upon the extent of ones involvement with them.

In the western world the pursuit of God moves along evidentiary lines. It is assumed that God must be proven by external factors. And we have the classic proofs characterized by what are called in the Roman Church the Thomistic Proofs. There are five classic proofs. (1) The argument from design –creation needed a master craftsman; (2) the moral argument –the general tendency toward moral principles argues for a moral creator; (3) the ontological argument –the universal sense that there is such a being; (4) The existence of miracles; (5) the magnitude of the universe and the vastness of space. In any event the western world demands concrete proof. But of course there are always ways to counteract these external evidences. For every beautiful sunset there are tornados that tear up the landscape. And of course the tragedies of life counteract the idea of a benevolent deity.

In western religion the presence of God must always be accompanied by experiences that are appreciated in the senses. Those who do not have such experiences are suspect by those who do. And then there are those who gauge their whole relationship to God by performance –how He handles their requests.

In Archimedes famed statement, the accuracy of it has, of course, never been tested. In principle, however, everyone wants a place to stand, a place in the sun, as it were. Tiny specks, as we are in this vast universe, it has been at least the tacit wish of its inhabitants from the beginning of time. It is this wish that has sparked the search for God throughout the ages of human history. It has also been the criterion that has governed the kind of response that the seeker has hoped for. Above all else, the seeker after God must have a certain degree of certitude. That, of course, is why the argument has been so avid. One wants the truth if one can get it. There is too much at stake to settle for anything less. In this respect, one can hardly blame the atheist for demanding irrefutable evidences. The problem is, however, that we seek for our "irrefutable" evidences in the wrong places. In fact, the very search for evidences in the human dimension-evidences that are linked to the space/time continuum tend to lead us far astray from the vitality of the certitude we are seeking. The fundamental reason for this is that we are functioning in a different dimension than the deity. The question that keeps coming up continuously is how long? How long has the earth been around? How long has the universe existed? In fact, how long is long? Out of this come all the questions about space and time that turn out to be actually irrelevant. The question of how long God has been around has absolutely no bearing on the question of who made the universe. Or how or why. It may satisfy the inevitable curiosity of mankind for discovering his roots, but it will not in any way enhance his capacities, especially to know God.

The fundamental reason for this is that God occupies a different dimension. But now we are "begging the question."

We are accustomed to seeing time on a horizontal plane, thus when we talk of God we think in terms of horizontal sequences. When did He start? Did He have a beginning? When did time begin? Did God have a beginning? And thus when we try to prove God, we must ask when did He start and where? What does it mean to inhabit eternity? The truth of the matter is that in referring to God we must eliminate time sequence *per se* in favor of quality of life. It is not how long has He lived but rather what is the essence of His life? But once again we are stymied, because the nature in essence of His life is outside our human dimension. According to Peter the only way we can enter into that dimension is when we have become partakers of the divine nature. And that of course happens in the re-birth.

So then how do we get to know God? Or how do we prove His existence? If we are unable to enter into the issues of His time sequence how will we ever find out about it? The answer is that we must enter into the same dimension as God if we want to know Him or prove Him. And how do we do that? The answer is not easy, but it is real. You cannot prove God without knowing Him and you cannot know Him unless He reveals Himself to you. He must reveal Himself to you. "*You have not chosen me but I have chosen you and ordained you that you should go and bring forth fruit*" (John 15:16). But then how do we know that He is worth knowing? You don't. But if you have to find out whether or not He's worth knowing before you pursue Him, you will never find Him.

We find God in the seeking and not in the proving. There is no way that we can prove Him without His coming to us in the seeking.

*But where then do we start?*

We start with the desire to know Him. But what if we do not have the desire to know Him? Then we wait until we do. The day will come when you will want to know Him. When that day comes, you will find Him. But that makes no sense at all. Well, trying to prove God with human equipment makes no sense at all.

Atheism makes no sense at all because it is the effort of humans to scan the universe and come up with the conclusion that God is not out there. Western theologians make no sense at all, because they attempt to prove God on the basis of the evaluation of His performance by human standards and criteria. Spiritism makes no sense at all because it is the effort to capture God at the spirit level on the basis of human knowledge and equipment. The pursuit of God through "spirituality" makes no sense at all because it is the effort of humans to evaluate the divine with inadequate tools. The pursuit of God through the miraculous makes no sense at all because it is the effort of humans to evaluate what constitutes the miraculous and what are the standards and conditions. What does make sense is that humans, desperate for a place to start, turn to God and find there a platform of faith in spite of human inadequacy.

## THE PURSUIT OF GOD

In the pursuit of God it is common for westerners to get caught up in evidences. And then begins an endless search for something that we can put our weight on –a place to stand. So what is wrong with that? What is wrong with it is that there is no such place to stand in our pursuit of God. And why is that? There is no place to stand because God Himself stands in the depths of eternity beyond the capacity of the human mind. When people think of God as eternal they invariably see Him in terms of endless time or longevity. That is not the true meaning of eternity either in the Hebrew language or the Greek.

## OF TIME AND ETERNITY

The Hebrew word which is translated eternal is 'olam. This word does not mean extent of time or have anything to do with time *per se*, but has to do with an indefinite quality of ages. The Greek word *aion* is similar. It is used in the New Testament. It means ages, and has to do with the quality of life rather than the quantity of time. So, for example, we speak of the "age of realism" or the "age of anxiety." Similarly, *'olam* means quality of life, as for "a time to sing or a time to dance or a time to mourn." In Ecclesiastes 3 when the "preacher" is discussing these facets of life, he says, "He [God] has set 'olam [the world] in our hearts; He has made everything orderly in its time." In that context, he says, "He hath set the world in our hearts." In other words when the Bible discusses eternal matters in terms of God or His people He is talking about a depth of life that has nothing to do with extent of time. As far as the Greek language is concerned, we get our word "eon" from the Greek word *aion*. Once again, we are talking about qualities of life that have to do with the world in which we are living.

## THE QUALITY OF EXISTENCE

In discussing the eternity of God, we must abandon the simple time factor and realize that there are many levels or layers of life involved here where the depth of God's life is not measured in time but in quality of existence. And thus, to use the word eternity in either describing God or attempting to prove the extent of His existence, we are dealing with a quality that is human and inapplicable. John defines the deeper meaning of eternal life in John 17:3 "*This is life eternal that they may know Thee the only true (real, genuine) God and he whom you have sent, Jesus Christ*".

## OF TIME AND ANTIQUITY

It is thus that we must see God in levels of existence beyond human sensitivities and abandon the questions relative to antiquity. Thus the existence of a world or being of a million and a half years should pose no problem. Moreover, the effort to prove God via the recency of man is only relative. In fact, the Bible is fundamentally a culturally oriented book that does not really reach into the antiquities.

Unfortunately these are the things that cause the atheist to stop and ponder. Generally speaking the creationist has made God too small –too much a prisoner of a space time universe. The wonder is that it is so unnecessary and yet so much is bartered with it.

If the problem of the creationist is too diminutive a God, the problem of the atheist is too crass a concept of materialism. And thus the diminutive quality belongs in the head of the seeker. "We can't accept a deity that does not have a *terminus ad quem* or a *terminus ad quo*. (A time from which or a time to which). Whether the time frame be numbered in the millions or billions, one is still confined to a space/time prison.

## THE SPIRITIST AND TIMELESSNESS

On the other hand, the spiritist who has erased the space time boundaries has left himself only with fabrications of his own diminutive thinking. There are no boundaries-no parameters. In the orient each person; each family unit; has its own fabricated deity. If that seems convenient, it is also totally afloat in the stratosphere of undifferentiated nothingness. And indeed the ultimate reward of such Oriental philosophy is nirvana which is just exactly that –undifferentiated nothingness. This is in fact the underlying structure of Oriental philosophy –the concept of nirvana. In the broad spectrum of reincarnation, Oriental philosophy includes return to the earth in various forms. The forms are related to what is called the "karma," which is a sort of balance sheet of deeds, good and bad. Actually they accumulate over the history of a given family so that as each one comes along he has a certain responsibility for off-setting the bad deeds with good deeds until ultimately the account is cleared. The clearing of the account is not all that simple. However, if one does not reach a higher goal of performance, one returns to the earth in a lesser form of being. If, on the other hand, one should be fortunate enough to clear the account, the reward is nirvana, which means a sort of semiconscious state in which one exists in eternity, undisturbed with the rigors of earthly life. Such a philosophy is germane to the entire spectrum of Oriental religion, including the most substantial part of Hinduism, which has to do with the triumvirate of Brahman, Vishnu and Sicva. These are the three main deities although there are thousands of lesser deities.

## OF TIME AND WESTERN RELIGION

We come then to the great spectrum of western religion, which is strongly oriented to the material world and to the world of time and space in which the deity must prove himself through performance. This, of course, is where the western theologian gets into so much difficulty. It is very hard to accept a deity that disappointment. The western theologian has not only the problem of dealing with the space/time universe, but also the problem of evil, inasmuch as performance becomes a key part of ones beliefs. "How could God make such a world?"

And then of course we return to the problem of "Bedrock." In looking for a place to stand, one tries to ascribe to the phenomena of creation a kind of solidity that is not really to be found there. The problem with it is that as was discussed in the early part of the book the atoms that make up this universe (submicroscopic particles) are not all that solid. If we were to magnify the elements to a high enough degree we would find that there is a considerable amount of space between each particle. Thus, the rock upon which we think to stand is filled with particles that do not form a solid mass.

### WHERE DO WE STAND?

We are left then with a considerable dilemma. "Where do we find a place to stand?" Where is God if that is what we are looking for as a place of solidity?

There is an approach to the enigma that has strong merit. If we cannot find God ourselves in the pursuit of the space/time universe, then He must find us, if we are going to ever believe in Him. If that seems absurd, so is the entire universe. And so especially is the pursuit of the deity. The point is that if He wants us to find Him, He's going to have to be the chief artificer of that encounter. So how then does it come about? How do we encounter the deity? The fundamental answer is that He encounters us. If that seems absurd remember that He is quite beyond our capacity of such an encounter. It is eternity as levels or depths of experience that go beyond the human frame, that we are at a loss to come to Him on our own terms.

### FINDING GOD IN THE PURSUIT OF HIM

So now we come to the bottom line of how God encounters us in our pursuit of Him. We find Him in the pursuit and not in the discovery *per se*. As we keep open to Him, He comes to us, stealing across the landscape of our lives. We do not know how it happens, but suddenly there He is. He was there all along and we never knew it. He was searching for us whilst we were pursuing Him. Does that seem uncertain? So has been everything else that one has tried.

So how then do we prove God before we "take a chance on Him?" We don't. It is really impossible for a human being to prove God who exists in a totally "other" dimension as far as His basic reality is concerned. All we can do is turn to Him; take a chance on Him; and trust Him to prove Himself to us. Whereas this may seem quite uncertain to the human mind, it is certainly far less uncertain than the human mind attempting to organize proofs



for God. If God wants us to know Him, then He has to reveal Himself to us. That is a cardinal point. If He does not reveal Himself to us then in a large degree we are "justified" in not identifying with Him.

If this seems uncertain, remember it is your spirit that is at stake here. If others think you are too subjective or if you are unable to prove God to others, that is not your problem. When God has proven Himself to you, you will find the certainty to be far beyond anything that you have been able to fabricate yourself. It is not up to God to prove Himself to humans, but rather up to humans to turn to God for help.

Remember the western theologian bases his proofs for God on performance. This puts him in a position of being the judge of God's performance. The Oriental philosopher bases his belief in God on spirit "spiritistic" expressions. He makes no effort to prove God, but only to experience the spirit realm as handed down to him through the centuries of familial deities. The atheist, unable to prove either, decides to drop the whole matter and pursue his own philosophical thought.

(Scripture passages are translated from the Greek text.)

[Harvester Home](#) | [Essays](#) | [Booklets](#) | [Commentaries/Translations](#) | [Books](#) | [The Messenger](#)  
[Audio Messages](#) | [About the Author](#) | [About the Harvester Mission](#)