

KNOW that HE IS the "I AM" GOD (pt 2)

Ps. 19:1-5; Ps. 46:10; Ro 1:18-31; Heb 11:3

III. AFFIRMATIONS (cont)—N.B. Alvin Plantinga's "Two Dozen (or so) Theistic Arguments"

- A. *A Priori*, pre-philosophical, pre-theological bases—what's "known about God is evident within them," "imprinted on their consciences" (*Ellicott Commentary*), cf. Jn 1:9—"true light that enlightens every man"
- B. *A Posteriori*—reasoning from effects to causes, from what is to what must have been or be
 - 1. Deeply human capacity: to wonder, to ask why, to seek reasons, to find explanations for what is
 - a. Children's incessant "why" (eat peas? go to bed? babies?) questions—often re the origins of things
 - b. Plato & Aristotle re "wonder" as beginning of philosophy; Scripture re "fear" of God as beginning of wisdom—thus "awe" at His wondrous workings (cf. Ps. 19: 1-5 & Ps. 46:9)
 - c. How do we discern others' minds? What enables us to say he's "wise, or brave, or artistic"?
 - 2. Paul's Cosmology: "clearly seen, being understood through what was made;" cf. Heb 11:3
 - 3. Past masters: Plato; Aristotle; Augustine; Aquinas; Leibniz; Copernicus; Newton; Polkinghorne
 - 4. Current apologists
 - a. J. Warner Wallace: *Cold-Case Christianity & God's Crime Scene*—a seasoned detective provides easily-grasped reasons—employing methods familiar to skillful historians
 - b. Richard E. Simmons III: *On the Existence of God: A Series of Essays*—a businessman's short, easily read in 10 minutes, 56 vignettes
 - c. Robert H. Nelson: *God? Very Probably: Five Rational Ways to Think about the Question of God*—eminent economist reveals his reasons for abandoning agnosticism
 - d. Stephen Meyer: *Return of the God Hypothesis: Three Scientific Discoveries that Reveal the Mind Behind the Universe*—scholarly exposition, demonstrating reasons to believe in Intelligent Design
 - 5. Cosmological "arguments" build upon Paul's "clearly seen, being understood through what was made" (Ro 1:18); thus "the worlds were framed by the word of God, so that the things which are seen were not made of things which are visible" (Heb 11:13)
 - a. *Kalam*: (brilliantly explained by William Lane Craig, of "Reasonable Faith"): 1) Whatever begins to exist has a cause; 2) The universe began to exist; 3) Therefore, the universe has a cause
 - b. Scientific Discoveries revealing Mind behind universe, as explained by Stephen Meyer
 - 1. Expanding universe points to a moment of "singularity" or creation—virtually all physicists & astronomers now believe; thus clear theistic confessions by astronomers such as Alan Sandage
 - 2. "Goldilocks Universe" increasingly points to intricate planning, design—a surprising "anthropic" factor at work; *Privileged Planet* data
 - 3. DNA "miracle" and origin of life study indicates improbability of naturalistic beginnings—only information (the *Word*) explains the intricacy of cells
 - c. Thomistic philosophy (following Thomas Aquinas) finds good reason to conclude God *Is*—cf. Jacques Maritain's *Approaches to God*: 1) motion & Prime Mover; 2) efficient causes & First Cause; 3) contingency & Necessary Being; 4) degrees of being & Supreme Being; 5) governance of cosmos
 - d. "Principle of Sufficient Reason" identified with G. W. Leibniz
 - 1. Thus Einstein: "The most incomprehensible thing about the universe is that it is comprehensible."
 - 2. "Why is there something rather than nothing"? The most reasonable explanation: God.
 - 6. Teleological "arguments" (evidences of design, purpose)
 - a. William Paley's illustration of finding a watch in a field, finding in its complexity a Maker
 - b. Extraordinary mathematical improbability of "chance" organizing orderly cosmos—Roger Penrose calculated odds at 10 raised to the 10(123)th power—an almost inconceivable number!
 - c. Discovery Institute & independent scholars amassing details—Michael Behe, William Dembski, Douglas Axe; Michael Denton; David Berlinski; Gerald Schroeder; Hugh Ross; Werner Gitt *et al*

IV. CALAMITOUS CONSEQUENCES OF DISBELIEF —foolish idolators indulge in numerous (count two dozen!) forms of self-destructive, socially-pernicious behaviors (Ro 1:21-32), evident on all sides now as ever

V. NOTABLE SCHOLARS' RECENT RECONSIDERATIONS

- A. David Stove: *Darwinian Fairytales: Selfish Genes, Errors of Heredity, and Other Fables of Evolution*
- B. Anthony Flew: *There Is a God: How the World's Most Notorious Atheist Changed His Mind*
- C. Thomas Nagel: *Mind and Cosmos: Why the Materialist Neo-Darwinian Conception of Nature is Almost Certainly False*
- E. Thomas Neil: *Taking Leave of Darwin: A Longtime Agnostic Discovers the Case for Design*