

God On Trial

James Lynn Smith
2010

(10 minutes)

The Unity version of God versus Abraxas (an ancient Gnostic concept of God as both good and evil)

Voice 1. There are two Gods; one is evil. Some call him Satan.

Voice 2. There is one God, but He is insane and self-destructive.

Voice 3. There is one God, but the nature of His substance must create opposite effects. His created reality is a zero-sum game.

Voice 4. There is only one God and God is good.

Voice 4. To 3: What would motivate a God to create if there must be as much bad as good? If we come from that God, then our motives and feeling must also derive from Him. Our minds must mirror Him in some way. And who among us will feel any motive to do a good, knowing that it will be nullified by a negative? That would cause futility and *lack* of creativity. Yet, from the Great Mind, here we are surrounded by creation.

Voice 3. Whatever. But you have to admit that dynamic opposites exist in the natural world and its laws, regardless. Action creates equal and opposite reaction.

Voice 4. (To 3) Right, but there is more good than its opposite. Imagine that there is some surface of consciousness separating pleasure (upwards) and pain (downward). Say this surface is a membrane and can oscillate.

Voice 2. Like the surface of a lake with waves? Gravity and wave nature would make waves splash or ripple upward after an object pushes the water downward.

Voice 4. Exactly. Our creator's laws assure that when the spiritual membrane is pushed down, it must come back up in a positive rebound. However, the membrane midpoint does not rest at neutral at all places. There are regions over its vast reaches with ambient upward displacement. So that rebound crest, which also rests upon the original ambient good, feels

wonderful. We must move our lives toward the abiding swell of ambient good to endure and appreciate the oscillations of spiritual existence. This ambient good *has* to exist. Otherwise there would be no motive for a universe of dynamic action. All would be in an inert state forever.

Voice 1. You are both nuts with your fancy talk. There has to be a Devil, and God can do nothing about it but struggle with us in the middle as pawns.

Voice 2. You're just describing two Gods with opposing characters. Effectively, that is the same as one God with a split personality, an insane God with a loving side and a menacing side.

Voice 4. Even an insane being has motives and reason. Why bother to create the positive if it merely balances the negative? This would be true if God senses all consequences. Why do you think God made us?

Voice 2. To help Him resolve his insanity. That puts a huge burden on us. We must fix God, or we will be doomed.

Voice 4. That's a misunderstanding of God. That position justifies terrorists with religious zeal who think God needs help in eliminating the unholy. Then they kill and commit the very "evil" they try to rid God of. God doesn't need help. God is one, and all good.

Voice 1. Well maybe there is not a separate Devil-God; but I think he is a *part* of God. You have to admit, terrible things happen, so this side of God is frightening and dangerous. Abraxas was the name some of those ancient Gnostics called this God. There is no insanity in his different sides; they are just sworn enemies. That's how the universe works. The crest and trough of an ocean wave keep swapping positions in an eternal struggle.

Voice 3. I think I agree with the effect, but not the motives and labeling.

Voice 4. Consider our natural world. There is prey and predator. Do you think the lion feels like an evil being? It is not. It is just a part of the cycle of life. You seem to mistake the existence of occasional pain with evil. The pain of a swift kill for food is followed by the pleasure of nourishment. God actually senses the experience of both creatures. The prey lived its life according to its nature which included much joy and satisfaction. It did not dwell on its final state. And where is it now? Certainly not in the carcass

remains or the lion's belly. Its essence has returned to God. How do you know that in the final bleat of panic, the prey did not find its true nature and willingly give up its earthly slot for reunion and recycling by the Source?

Voice 3. That is all very romantic. You surely have a way of slipping into your song and dance. But there is still this pain/pleasure duality. It doesn't matter if you call it evil or good. Labeling does not resolve the issue of the opposites "pleasure and *pain*". Rational creatures dread the pain part.

Voice 4. You probably have a sensible, logical interpretation of the physical universe. You seem to recognize consciousness also. If the universe is an integrated system, the source of consciousness comes from it. Thought comes from it, one way or another. If we look at all this from the highest perspective, it is the Source. It is God, the omniscient and omnipresent. For such a being to create, there must be an urge or desire to bring something into existence - a LOVE. Love as an impetus means there is more good than bad. That doesn't mean the bad times don't come. It means God will be with you.

Voice 2. And just how does that help?

Voice 4. If your consciousness unites with the All, the perspective is so broad that your bad times are as in a storybook about someone else. Your spirit is in the Presence, and that makes the bad endurable and seen as temporary in the light of eternal flow.

Voice 3. Wow! Now that little story is just plain smooth. That is *some* kind of trip... if it's for real, that is. Where is the evidence of this underlying "good" that supports us? And what use is it if it doesn't actually remove the bad, the pain?

Voice 4. It is true that the human race wanders far from the consciousness that puts us in the Presence, that swell of ambient good. But this good is found in small ways even by those who may not consider it exactly spiritual. Examples are hypnosis to reduce or remove acute and chronic pain, finding a sense of meaning and purpose that enables one to suffer and feel that it is worthwhile. To find this Love is to find a sense of purpose that goes beyond anything the world can normally give us. Diligence inspired by love and purpose has done amazing things. Right here in this world.

Voice 1. Are you saying this “love”, this “good” keeps bad from hurting?

Voice 4. Bad will hurt, but with the Presence, you have strength to endure it. There is a difference in pain and suffering. With the desire and sense of meaning that comes with the Presence, your body may hurt, but your consciousness sees this as only a part of what fills it. Without this presence, “bad” can bring only despair and suffering.

Voice 3. You are saying that there is something in the universe other than this God-made substance which *normally* polarizes into *opposites*? Some other force that is desire or Love?

Voice 4. Yes. It has to be. It is a part of what we call “good”, but it is also Divine Meaning. It is the *desire* of God. Sentient beings were *desired* into existence by the Source. If we can know this desire and be in the Presence, there is nothing that can overcome our true being.

Voice 1. So, how is any of this speculation useful to ordinary people who try but cannot quite buy into all this high-power theology? Can you preach this attitude to a dying person? Can he just go into the Presence and snap out of it?

Voice 4. A dying person can perceive meaning, desire and the Presence, but inwardly not want to prolong his life here. There is a point after which the struggle to remain isn’t worth it. Enthusiasm for this particular life domain wanes. This is a part of the preparation for moving on to other spiritual experiences. Especially when the awareness of our true eternal self infuses the mind. Then it is seen that there is much more than this ailing life.

Voice 1. I hear you, but this is all speculation.

Voice 2. My logical mind is not convinced.

Voice 3. Somehow I still feel verification of a “good God” is incomplete here.

Voice 4. Is there anything logical about rejecting the existence of radio waves because we can’t sense them directly? You can’t reason your ears into hearing the waves. The existence of good is not about logic. All of you are voicing a pessimistic philosophy about good and God. If you really took

your points about this to heart, you wouldn't even bother to argue about it. There would be no net percentage in living or believing anything because everything good is offset by bad. Let me ask you: Why do you get up in the morning?

Voice 1. Well, there is the hope that the bad will just fall on someone else and ...

Voice 2. I hope that we can fix things so the Universe becomes sane.

Voice 3. We can only hope we endure the bad so we can reach the good, but if we know bad is coming then we ...

Voice 4. I hear the word "hope" from each of you. I think you all want the positive part of life and pray there is more good than bad. You are secretly hoping to find your negative philosophy is wrong! Something in you is reaching for more than your model of God allows. To even debate this whole thing means you want to win something. You desire. In some way, despite yourself, you are reflecting the love force of God that creates the universe. In measuring positive against negative in the universe, an *abundant* sum remains. And that sum *is* ... the good of God.

(10 minutes, 4 voices)

pw telura

More Short Stories & Readers' Theater Scripts at

Storylandscapes.net