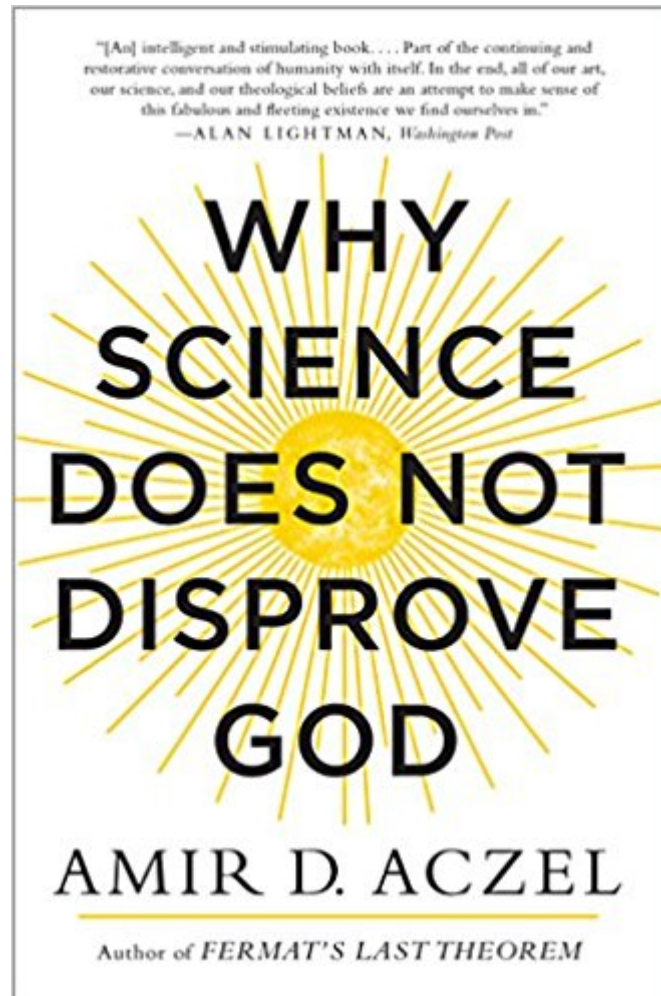




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Why Science Does Not Disprove God



Synopsis

Based on interviews with eleven Nobel Prize winners and many other prominent physicists, biologists, anthropologists, and psychologists, as well as leading theologians and spiritual leaders, *Why Science Does Not Disprove God* is a "well-informed and readable" (Wall Street Journal) analysis of the religious implications of our ever-increasing understanding of life and the universe. The renowned science writer Amir Aczel ("One of our best science popularizers" — Publishers Weekly) masterfully refutes the overreaching claims of the "New Atheists," providing millions of educated believers with a clear, engaging explanation of what science really says, how there's still much space for the Divine in the universe, and why faith in both God and empirical science are not mutually exclusive.

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Customer Reviews

Starred Review In *Aczel*, Richard Dawkins and his fellow New Atheists face a formidable opponent. As a mathematician with a Berkeley-Harvard résumé, Aczel wields impressive intellectual weapons in demolishing the New Atheists' claims that science has disproven the existence of God. With compelling reasoning, Aczel demonstrates that whenever Dawkins and his allies turn their attacks against anything but naively literal readings of the Bible, they distort or misrepresent the methods and findings of science. Darwinism has provided no godless explanation of how human consciousness emerged. The attempt to reduce the astounding fine-tuning of the big bang to quantum physics likewise leaves huge questions unanswered. Disproofs of God's existence based on probability theory similarly fail under scrutiny. When the New Atheists buttress

their flawed science by appealing to the authority of Einstein, Aczel catches them cherry-picking quotations, so hiding complexities in the great physicist's metaphysical thinking. Those who truly grapple with modern science, Aczel finally avers, discover not a disproof of God but rather perplexing mysteries, such as the stunning vistas of infinity that the intensely religious theorist Georg Cantor glimpsed behind his revolutionary continuum hypothesis. Such mysteries may not signify the presence of the divine, but they will surely stir deep wonderings. --Bryce Christensen

--This text refers to the Audio CD edition.

"If everyone understood as well as Amir Aczel does that scientific and religious ways of knowing belong to entirely separate and uncompetiting forms of human experience, the world would be a much more pleasant place to live in." (IAN TATTERSALL, American Museum of Natural History (Division of Anthropology); author of *Masters of the Planet: In Search of Our Human Origins*)

"Amir Aczel combines scientific credibility, stylistic elegance, and argumentative vigor in *Why Science Does Not Disprove God*. What's more, he's right." (RABBI DAVID WOLPE, Sinai Temple (Los Angeles); author of *Why Faith Matters*)

"[A] thoughtful, erudite journey through modern science and philosophy, and a clear exposition of a problem with which humans have struggled for millennia." (MARIO LIVIO, astrophysicist, Space Telescope Science Institute; author of *Is God a Mathematician?* and *Brilliant Blunders*)

"Aczel is one of our best science popularizers." (Publishers Weekly)

"Amir Aczel is a pop idol of the science-writing world." (Willamette Week)

"In Aczel, Richard Dawkins and his fellow New Atheists face a formidable opponent. Aczel wields impressive intellectual weapons in demolishing the New Atheists' claims. ... With compelling reasoning, Aczel demonstrates that Dawkins and his allies ... distort or misrepresent the methods and findings of science." (Booklist (starred review))

"[An] intelligent and stimulating book. ... Part of the continuing and restorative conversation of humanity with itself. In the end, all of our art, our science and our theological beliefs are an attempt to make sense of this fabulous and fleeting existence we find ourselves in." (ALAN LIGHTMAN, Washington Post)

"Explains that science and religion should not be mutually exclusive [and] you can embrace scientific progress while staying devoted to your faith." (Beliefnet)

The New Atheists have by and large appeared to agree that if they're going to disprove Christianity, they're going to go the route of science. It's a quite strange route really, but it's the route taken because today most people do think scientifically, or at least think that they do. Unfortunately, a lot

of people who make science their forte and ignore all the other areas tend to have that show in their argumentation. Richard Dawkins is no philosopher, but that doesn't mean he has no grounds to take on the Thomistic arguments obviously. Victor Stenger isn't a historian, but that won't stop him from talking about the historical Jesus as if he was an authority. In our day and age, the scientists have become the new priesthood. This is not to disparage science, but it is to say that when scientists speak outside of their field on areas they have not studied, we have no reason to take them as authorities. Aczel will not take them as authorities either and has written a work demonstrating the fallacies in their thinking. When reading the work, it is unclear also what side Aczel falls on. He does not write like a Christian. In many ways, he does not even write like a theist. Still, his main contention is that the new atheists are doing a disservice to the arguments. He knows the material well and has spoken to many of the best scientific minds out there on the topic. Due to his different positions in the area of religion, it will be difficult for opponents of his to play the bias card. The downside is that the work is largely a defensive work in that sense and thus does not really touch on the positive arguments for the existence of God. Of course, it does have some areas in science that certainly can seem to point to a deity, but at this point the idea of "God-of-the-Gaps" is trotted out. (Strangely enough, the critics of theism never consider they are going with a "naturalism-of-the-gaps.") Of course, Aczel could say that these are positive evidences such as the fine-tuning of the universe, and in that case he would indeed be right. The question is not "What is the best explanation of what we don't know?" but rather "What is the best explanation of what we do know?" Absent are the great philosophical arguments for the existence of God, which I think are ultimately the way to go. Science can give evidence, but it is not the final authority, despite what many will think and some will think I am attacking science simply by saying that. I instead prefer to think I am giving science its proper field, which is the study of material objects and the material world. The ramifications that one draws from that study are indeed philosophical and the sad reality is that many scientists do turn out to be poor philosophers, but that has never really stopped them from trying! Ultimately, people who are advocating that science has disproven God are in fact doing science a disservice and limiting people in the field by saying that if you are going to be a serious scientist, you cannot be religious. A lot of great minds who are religious also could be dissuaded from entering the field and who knows what benefits they could bring? From a Christian standpoint, we have too often made it be science vs. religion and when that happens, people will go with whatever they think makes the most important contributions to their lives. Some scientists would be shocked to hear religious people think religion makes the most contribution, but indeed most do. Most think of the morals that they ascribe to their religion and the sense of meaning they find and

the wonder of the universe. The scientific view of atheism frankly doesn't offer an appeal to them and sadly they think "If it's science or the Bible, so much the worse for science." Now I am not of this standpoint as I think it's not either/or but both/and and the problem is a fundamentalism on both sides that thinks because you know something in one field, you know all fields. Having a Ph.D. in evolutionary biology does not qualify you to speak on Aristotelian philosophy or the study of the New Testament. Believing that your Scripture is the Word of God and that you have an infallible and inerrant message does not mean that you are therefore in the right on everything that you speak about. Both sides are making the same kind of mistake. Consider what one Christian authority said on this: "Usually, even a non-Christian knows something about the earth, the heavens, and the other elements of this world, about the motion and orbit of the stars and even their size and relative positions, about the predictable eclipses of the sun and moon, the cycles of the years and the seasons, about the kinds of animals, shrubs, stones, and so forth, and this knowledge he holds to as being certain from reason and experience. Now, it is a disgraceful and dangerous thing for an infidel to hear a Christian, presumably giving the meaning of Holy Scripture, talking nonsense on these topics; and we should take all means to prevent such an embarrassing situation, in which people show up vast ignorance in a Christian and laugh it to scorn. The shame is not so much that an ignorant individual is derided, but that people outside the household of faith think our sacred writers held such opinions, and, to the great loss of those for whose salvation we toil, the writers of our Scripture are criticized and rejected as unlearned men. If they find a Christian mistaken in a field in which they themselves know well and hear him maintaining his foolish opinions about our books, how are they going to believe those books in matters concerning the resurrection of the dead, the hope of eternal life, and the kingdom of heaven, when they think their pages are full of falsehoods on facts which they themselves have learnt from experience and the light of reason? Reckless and incompetent expounders of Holy Scripture bring untold trouble and sorrow on their wiser brethren when they are caught in one of their mischievous false opinions and are taken to task by those who are not bound by the authority of our sacred books. For then, to defend their utterly foolish and obviously untrue statements, they will try to call upon Holy Scripture for proof and even recite from memory many passages which they think support their position, although "they understand neither what they say nor the things about which they make assertion." Who said that? Augustine did, about sixteen centuries ago. It still stands today. Aczel's book will be a good read for those interested in this debate, though at times if you're not familiar, the terminology can get difficult to follow, but it does for the most part tend to be readable. If you're interested in this kind of debate, this is a book you should seriously consider. In Christ, Nick Peters

Deeper Waters Christian Ministries

Especially good in re: mathematics & physics and their relationship. Anyone who thinks science disproves God needs to check this book out.

I was hoping to read a logical civil fact based argument, but the author taints his position by personally attacking the New Atheist. For someone like me trying to sort through faith vs. science, the author's obvious venomous regard for atheist made me suspicious of his arguments. I did enjoy chapter 5 "Einstein, God and the Big Bang" which was fact based, but unfortunately, the author regressed into a diatribe

Fair read, sprinkled with some great history about the giants of science. The author disputes atheistic claims primarily with the argument that "we really do not know". His theory essentially states that the absence of proof is the evidence for the existence of God. There is no discussion of the miraculous transformations that took place in the lives of the followers of Jesus Christ.

This is a fascinating exploration of how science supports religion. We used it as a basis for our Christian Adult Education Forum at our church.

Fascinating. An excellent read.

Good book

The author explains his arguments clearly. He is current with those today making the same arguments and making the counter arguments. His logic is careful and convincing. Sometimes the science is difficult. But I think that is due more the complexity of the concepts than the author's ability to communicate. I did not feel that the author tried to proselytize.

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