

IT NEEDS GREAT FAITH TO BE AN ATHEIST

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R. C. Sproul pernah mengatakan, “There is no issue that provokes more controversy than the question of whether or not there is a God.”¹

Situasi ini dengan tepat disiratkan dalam judul buku *Intellectuals Don't Need God & Other Modern Myths* karangan Alister McGrath. McGrath sendiri selanjutnya menempatkan halangan rasional sebagai faktor pertama di antara delapan faktor yang membuat orang terhalang menjadi orang Kristen.²

Del Ratzsch memaparkan 4 keberatan utama yang seringkali ditujukan terhadap keyakinan religius (*Philosophy of Science: The Natural Sciences in Christian Perspective* [Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 1986, 107-114])

#1. Religious belief is not scientific (p. 107)...”it is presupposed that anything not scientific is suspect, unreasonable, false or the like” (p. 108). Kelemahan: Is the belief that I exist scientific? I certainly have neither acquired nor rested that belief on the basis of sensory evidence. After all, if that belief depended on what I could sense, I would have to assume my own existence at the outset in order to believe that I was having the relevant sensory experience; and that would make the whole process hopelessly circular...the principle that anything not scientific is suspect undercuts itself. It seems rather clear that that principle is a philosophical, not a scientific, principle and consequently declares itself to be illegitimate (p. 108).

#2. Religious belief is unprovable. Another popular challenge is that since religious beliefs cannot be proved, they are suspect or irrational, or at least suffer by comparison with scientific beliefs. Keberatan: since neither scientific beliefs nor our common everyday beliefs are susceptible to strict proofs, this principle would rule them out along with religious beliefs (p. 108).

#3. Religious belief is unsupported by evidence...there is no evidence for the basic religious beliefs, combined with the further claim that it is not rational to believe anything not based on evidence. The perception that science demands evidence for what it accepts is part of what makes this view attractive (p. 108). Keberatan: In general, what we *perceive* to be evidence, and what we *take* it to be evidence for, is relative to the background theories we accept...When the religious critic says that here is no evidence, he certainly does not mean to be denying the existence of the world, or of life, or of himself, but is serving notice that he does not accept the background principles that give evidential status to those things (p. 109). If universe could not occur independently, then the existence of this one would certainly be evidence – conclusive evidence, in fact – for theistic belief. But the critic’s claim that there is no evidence implies that any principle connecting existence to createdness is false and that no one will know of any such connection, ever. What is his evidence for that sweeping

¹R. C. Sproul, *If There's a God, Why Are There Atheists? : Why Atheists Believe in Unbelief*, Revised edition of the book *The Psychology of Atheism* (Wheaton, IL: Tyndale House Publishers, 1978). Electronic edition.

² (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1993), 64-66..

claim?...if he has no evidence for that position, then in holding it he is violating the principle of “no belief without evidence” that he is trying to use against Christian (p. 110)... If one believes something on the basis of evidence, then one must have evidence for one’s evidence. But, of course, if one can only believe things on the basis of evidence, then one must have evidence for one’s evidence for one’s evidence...if that sequence doesn’t ever end, then all beliefs will be ultimately illegitimate – including the belief that one should (p. 110) have evidence for one’s belief (And, incidently, what is the evidence for that principle itself?), p. 111.

#4, Religious belief is superfluous. ...in the face of scientific advance, religious belief is superfluous. Science, it is said, has consistently taken over more and more of the territory once occupied by religious beliefs (p. 112)...Religion...flourishes in the gaps of naturalistic explanations, and as science continues to fill in those gaps there will eventually be no place left (p. 112). Keberatan: Incompleteness in scientific naturalistic accounts of reality does seem unavoidable. Suppose we could explain every event in the world by reference to some set of natural laws. Since the operation of those laws would be an important feature of reality, we could ask why those laws held. The response could be either that those laws were just “brute fact” or that some deeper-level natural laws explained the set of laws in question, or some principle outside the normal scope of science (theological, for instance) could be cited. But the first response is no explanation at all, the second merely pushes the question back a step (so providing no *complete* scientific explanation), and the third goes beyond the scientific (so providing no complete *scientific* naturalistic explanation)--- p. 13. If such incompleteness is unavoidable, then the conclusion of the inductive argument – that eventually all gaps in our understanding of reality can be filled naturalistically – cannot be true in principle (p. 114).

Ludwig Feuerbach (1804-1872) dan Sigmund Freud (1856-1939)

Feuerbach: “The question of God cannot be finally avoided because it is a question about what kind of a universe we live in. This is a real question and it must have a real answer. We need to know the truth about God if we are to live our lives rightly (C. Stephen Evans, *The Quest for Faith: Reasons & Mystery as Pointers to God* [Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 1986], 32).

Richard Dawkins: iman Kristen adalah “ a persistently false belief held in the face of strong contradictory evidence”. (God Delusion [Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 2006], 5).

What is the clue a clue of? Here is where the experience of purposive order cuts deeper than the experience of cosmic wonder. The experience of cosmic wonder merely suggests there is a reason why all the things in the universe exist. Something or someone is behind it all, but that something or someone is very vague. The experience of purposive order suggests, however, that what is behind nature, the reason for the whole show, must be something like a mind, something with intelligence. For where things happen in an orderly way, where there is pattern or structure which brings about value, there mind is at work (Evans, *The Quest for Faith*, 42).

Mazmur 14:1 “the fool had said in his heart, there is no God”.

In the atheist's fruitless struggle to disprove Christianity, accusations have been made that the Christian's system rests entirely upon faith and that the atheist's position rests entirely upon reason (Roger E. Dickson, *The Fall of Unbelief* [Winona/Singapore/New Delhi: J. C. Choate Publications, 1982], 36).

Without doubt, it takes a greater faith to be an atheist than to be a Christian. It is more difficult to believe what the atheist believes than what the Christian believes. Atheism is more of a system of faith than Christianity. And it is more difficult to have his faith because it is not a faith based on evidence. It is based only on denials (Dickson, *The Fall of Unbelief*, 36).

For a person to be able to make this type of statement with authority, he would have to know the universe in its entirety and to possess all knowledge. If anyone had these credentials, then by definition he would be God (Josh McDowell, *A Ready Defense*, compiled by Bill Wilson; (San Bernardino: Here's Life Publishers, 1990), 316)

The general consensus is that while such arguments cast interesting light on the questions, they settle nothing. Although traditionally referred to as "arguments for God's existence," this is not an accurate description. All they do is show the inner consistency of belief in God – in much the same way as the classic arguments for atheism demonstrate its inner consistency, but not its evidential foundations. (Alister McGrath & Joanna Colicutt McGrath, *The Dawkins Delusion? Atheist Fundamentalism and the Denial of the Divine* [Downers Grove: IVP Books, 2007]. 25).

Dawkin: faith is intellectual nonsense; McGrath: Our beliefs may be shown to be *justifiable*, without thereby demonstrating that they are *proven* (Dawkins Delusion, 26).

Dawkins: belief in God represents belief in a being whose existence must be even more complex – and therefore more improbable. McGrath: the very fact that we are puzzling about how we came to be here is dependent on the fact that we are here and are thus able to reflect on the likelihood of this actuality (28)...the issue, then, is not whether God is *probable* but whether God is *actual* (29).---Dawkins Delusion.

It is therefore not the *gaps* in our understanding of the world which point to God but rather the very *comprehensibility* of scientific and other forms of understanding that requires an explanation. In brief, the argument is that *explicability itself requires explanation*. The more scientific advance is achieved, the greater will be our understanding of the universe – and hence the greater need to explain this very success. It is an approach which commends and encourages scientific investigation, not seeks to inhibit it (31). --- Dawkins Delusion.

The debate rages, unresolved. And its outcome is entirely to be expected; the great questions remain unanswered. There can be no question of scientific "proof" of ultimate questions. Either we cannot answer them or we must answer them on grounds other than the sciences (Dawkins Delusion, 35).

Most unbelieving scientists of my acquaintance are atheists on grounds other than their science; they bring those assumptions *to* their science rather than basing them *on* their science (Dawkins Delusion, 44). #