

Revocation of the divine judge

To be considered, an ideology, whether religious or not, must meet at least the following three conditions: it must be consistent with established facts, it must be coherent and it must respect human rights.

Although the present text is based on Christianity, it extends, with some adaptations, to all religions of the one God.

1. Revelation is contrary to the facts

Whether it is the history of the universe, the earth, life and man, Genesis is in clear contradiction with the facts. But it gets worse.

God is said to have sent us a Saviour 2000 years ago. Yet man, specifically Homo sapiens, has been around for about 300,000 years. Why did God allow mankind to macerate in ignorance and error for 298,000 years? Waiting so long before launching a rescue operation does not correspond to our idea of a Saviour, which makes the redemption story dubious and not very credible.

Today, one third of the world's population is attached to Christianity in varying degrees. For such a major divine intervention as the coming of Christ, after 2000 years of intense effort including crusades, the Inquisition, the slave trade, colonisation and countless forced conversions, the result is disappointing.

The believer wonders why two-thirds of humanity has been left to ignorance or error. Moreover, Christians are divided, not to mention the degree of faith of each. Providence and heavenly marketing are in great difficulty. In the cacophony of beliefs, no one religion has the upper hand, nor does it succeed in establishing itself by the evidence of its divine anchorage.

However, instead of judging it as a partial failure or questioning the divine solicitude, I consider revelation as a man-made fable, which explains the impossibility of establishing a single faith.

The fact that the Bible is on different ground from science is not an acceptable excuse for putting untruths in God's mouth. Also, all this shows that it is a mere myth.

2. The Bible is full of internal contradictions

For the requirement of internal consistency, Christianity contains major contradictions.

Some avatars of the French adage "*He who loves well punishes well*" are flamboyant.

The churches extol the love of God without the emphasis on intimidation that once accompanied it:

[Matthew 13:41-42] "*The Son of Man will send out his angels, and they will weed out of his kingdom everything that causes sin and all who do evil. They will throw them into the blazing furnace, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.*"

Believers hold their breath, but find it fair that God uses eternal torment. One would have expected justice to be more concerned with proportionality, for on earth, even inflicted by the worst sadists, all punishment has an end. Moreover, justice that respects human rights does not resort to punitive torture.

What a striking contrast to the message of forgiveness:

[Matthew 5:44]: "*But I say to you, love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you.*"

Unfortunately, any approach that is based on the principle of "Do as I say, not as I do" struggles to convince.

This is an internal contradiction, the enormity of which seriously discredits the Bible and clearly shows the logical impossibility of the Christian doctrine of the Last Judgement being true.

More circumspection should be exercised in the face of preconceived ideas. It is known that there are many imaginary and absurd stories in circulation. Hell is one of them, and an undrinkable one at that. The appetite for faith must be curbed by the need for coherence.

Other inconsistencies can be pointed out, such as the homophobic verse "Leviticus 20:13". One cannot attribute to God the will to give irrepressible homosexual tendencies to a part of the population and, at the same time, to condemn them so violently.

For the believer, the contradictions dissolve into a mystery that gives rise to spiritual wonder and even mysticism. But for the person whose reason is active and whose critical mind is alert, the contradictions are proof of the absurdity and emptiness of religious discourse.

3. For the Church, respect for human rights is lacking

For the third requirement, the Catholic Church condemned human rights until the Second Vatican Council in 1965. If today it says it accepts human rights, it does not respect the spirit of them. At present, it denies women equality extended to the priesthood. And it was even worse in the past.

In the original Christian Church, according to the doctrine of St. Paul, slavery was accepted as a natural and legitimate practice, but a Christian should not hold another Christian in slavery. Later, the Church condemned the slavery of the American Indians. But its attitude towards the black slave trade, initially organised by the Portuguese from 1441, was less glorious: a series of papal bulls approved and encouraged it:

- 1442 *Illius qui* (Eugene IV) endorses the conquests of Prince Henry the Navigator in Africa.
- 1452 *Dum diversas* (Nicholas V) gives the King of Portugal the power to subjugate Saracens, pagans and other unbelievers and even reduce them to perpetual slavery.
- 1455 *Romanus Pontifex* (Nicholas V) encourages Henry the Navigator to subjugate the 'Saracens and other infidels' to Christianity, possibly by force, relies on the progress of the conquests to bring about conversions, gives his approval to the Portuguese commercial

monopoly in Africa, and hopes that the natural populations will soon be converted to Christianity.

- 1456 *Inter cætera* (Calixtus III = Alfonso Borgia) states that the administration of the new Portuguese possessions and their interests should be entrusted to the Order of Christ, the brotherhood of Henry the Navigator; it authorises the enslavement of infidels, i.e. legitimises the enslavement of blacks.
- 1481 *Aeterni regis* (Sixtus IV) grants the conquered lands in Africa to the King of Portugal.

A theological justification has been put forward in which the children of Canaan are equated with blacks:

[Gen 9:25-27] *He said, "Cursed be Canaan! The lowest of slaves will he be to his brothers." He also said, "Praise be to the Lord, the God of Shem! May Canaan be the slave of Shem. May God extend Japheth's territory; may Japheth live in the tents of Shem, and may Canaan be the slave of Japheth."*

The French theologian Bellon de Saint-Quentin, in his 1740 Dissertation on the Negro trade and commerce, wrote: *"One can legally own slaves and use them; this possession and service are not contrary to natural law, nor to the divine written law, nor even to the law of the Gospel."* Dare we say that the Church is carrying out a divine plan?

Serfdom is a different status, but treated in a similar way. Despite Voltaire's campaign, the last serfs in France were those of the abbey of Saint-Claude (Jura) who remained in their condition until the French Revolution of 1789.

Whoever has encouraged moral regressions cannot hold the truth.

The God of the carrot and the stick

While only one precondition would suffice for the rejection of a religious ideology, none of the three conditions are met. Let us nevertheless force ourselves to a global analysis of its substance.

When you ask *"Do you believe in God?"* you may think you have asked the most fundamental question. But this is not so, because even assuming a form of soul survival, a God who does not judge us and does not hand out rewards or punishments, would not cause us any concern.

Faith is built on the belief that a Supreme Judge weighs our actions, rewards or punishes us. On earth, a father who would say, *"If you are wise, I will always love you; but if you disobey, I will reject you and you will go and live with the evil ogre who makes you suffer"* would be called unworthy. By transforming a tale of this kind into a divine decree, religions engage in moral blackmail. The believer lives between the anxiety of Judgement and the hope of a reward. However, since purgatory and hell are possible outcomes, 'hope' is mostly about overcoming anguish. Religion powerfully dramatises life and death, but I do not believe in the God of the carrot and the stick.

The fundamental question is “*Is there life after death?*” According to established knowledge, the answer is clearly no, because the death of every living being is final. Therefore, with or without faith in God, the threat of the Judgment vanishes.

I appreciate very much that life is neither an examination, nor a probationary period, nor a selection test with winners and losers in the afterlife. Life, thus de-dramatised, can be envisaged with less anxiety, more lightness, and above all without trembling. But this peace of mind is inaccessible to those who believe themselves to be immortal.

Everyone finds pleasure where his or her aspirations take him or her: the surrender to trust in faith or the argumentative renunciation of obviously erroneous theories.

Excerpts from Marcel Déleze's website:

[Resisting religious indoctrination](#)

www.deleze.name/marcel/en/philo/resistance-en.html