

As a nonreligious Jew who minored in philosophy as an undergrad, here is my response:

To discuss the veracity of Theism v. Atheism is an exercise in futility. It is too easy to fall into a sense of superiority --and triviality of the argument itself --and devolve into ad hominem accusations or, at least, negative thoughts.

Teaching children at an early age the punishment of hell and heavenly rewards of people pleasing is tantamount to child abuse.

Scientific evidence exists whether one believes in science or not. Science disproves, it doesn't prove. Belief in God is personal, so arguing such existence is daft. Rational argument for proof or denial is circular thinking that simply restates what it says and calls it god. The miracle of the design of the eye took mutation, selection and adaptation over thousands of years. No god involved.

I, personally, do not believe in miracles; but whenever I notice that one has occurred, the rush of joy is indescribable. I would accept as a miracle, if four Republican senators suddenly developed a strong enough spine to vote against the confirmation of ACB as justice of SCOTUS. This would be a purely sublime act of free choice. But that is something about which I have my doubts. They are victims of fear, similar to those who put their lives "in God's hands" and give up on an inner sense of right moral action.

People live according to the "luck" of their genetic makeup, familial circumstances plus geographic and financial conditions, etc. They may or may not take advantage of opportunities presented. All the while, they create their own meaningful lives. The closest I ever came to "believing" was in Santa Claus, and when I outgrew that belief, it was a sad day. However, a few years later, when my baby brother was 2, we left milk and cookies for Santa on Christmas eve. He was so excited, as was my 2yr old daughter, many years later. So, maybe believing without evidence, or enjoying belief in others, has its place. But, as Biden says, lets cut out the malarkey!

Anne Ferber

Afterthought:

Life is mostly froth and bubble, / Two things stand like stone, / Kindness in another's trouble, / Courage in your own.

Adam Lindsay Gordon, poet (19 Oct 1833-1870)