

The Philosopher and the Atheist

Episode 1 – I Know Nothing and I Know Everything,

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On a beautiful spring day, 2 men were taking a walk thru a park, looking at the trees, listening to the birds, taking in the stunning views of the surrounding country. Neither were in much of a hurry. Now days, people being in their own little worlds of their own choosing, just pass each other by and don't try to interact very much anymore. Nevertheless, as one of the men was about to walk past the other man, he saw the man was deep in thought. Though he was getting bored with the walk he was on and anxious to get back into his world, he was also outspoken and he saw an opportunity to flex his overpowering and incontainable intellect, so he tried to start a conversation.

ATHEIST It's a great day to get out and take a walk today isn't it?

PHILOSOPHER (Looking up, smiling) Yes, that it is.

ATHEIST Hey man, it looks like you are carrying the weight of the world on your shoulders. Tell me what ails you.

PHILOSOPHER Nothing ails me.

ATHEIST Well, you know what I mean. It just seems like you're in another world. And if I'm interrupting you, I'm sorry.

PHILOSOPHER Well, if you have something intelligent to say, I don't mind being interrupted.

ATHEIST Really? You might not believe this but today is your lucky day, because intelligence is my middle name. So, do you mind me asking you what you're thinking about?

PHILOSOPHER (Laughs questioningly) Oh boy...If you're that intelligent, then how about... what is the meaning of life?

ATHEIST (Laughs) Well that's an easy one. When you boil it down it, we're evolved creatures. We're here to procreate, to extend our species. Once we meet that goal, our meaning is at an end. That's it.

PHILOSOPHER (Rolls his eyes) I was afraid of that – the copulation hypothesis.

ATHEIST No, no, no! This is a great time to be alive. Science is cracking all the secrets of the universe. Some people can't handle the facts about existence. But there is no other purpose. We add our genes to the gene pool, we contribute whatever we do to the circle of life of our species, we die, that's it. I'd far rather live now than any other time when ignorance ruled.

PHILOSOPHER Oh! So not only are you intelligent, you are also not ignorant?

ATHEIST (Laughs) Well I wouldn't quite say it that way. But, what do you want to know? Go ahead. Ask me anything. I haven't found a question I can't answer yet.

PHILOSOPHER (Shakes his head) Ok! Then, how did the universe come into being?

ATHEIST (Immediately and fast) Quantum inflation! Can I tell you how the theory works?

PHILOSOPHER That's quite alright; I have a degree in Physics.

ATHEIST Really? Well I don't understand! Then you should know how the universe came into being. This is a well-known fact.

PHILOSOPHER Yes, Yes, I know. Let me ask you. Is quantum inflation a proven theory?

ATHEIST Well it depends by what you mean by proven. Nothing is 100% proven. So in that context, I do not think it is proven. However, most scientists now lean toward accepting quantum inflation as an explanation for how the universe came into being.

PHILOSOPHER (mumbling) This is going to be a long conversation.

ATHEIST What did you say?

PHILOSOPHER Nothing! Ok! Let me get more precise. What is the truth basis of accepting as a fact that the universe was created by a Quantum Inflation event?

ATHEIST Well I can't say it's a fact.

PHILOSOPHER A moment ago you said it was a well-known fact.

ATHEIST It is a well-known fact. It just isn't a fact fact. No theory is fact. It has to be able to be what is called falsifiable.

PHILOSOPHER (Sighs) Facts aren't facts unless they are fact facts. What's next, factually factual facts?

ATHEIST What?

PHILOSOPHER Never mind you wouldn't understand! Yes, I know Popper's idea of falsification. If a theory can't be falsified, then it is faith. Right? If it can be falsified, then it is an incorrect theory. Right? If it can be falsified, but no one has been able to do that, then it is an accepted theory. Right?

ATHEIST (Thinking) That's the idea.

PHILOSOPHER Ok, so then let's pursue this. What other ideas exist about the creation of the universe so we can test this idea of falsification on quantum inflation?

ATHEIST Well, all the other ideas have been pretty much discounted already.

PHILOSOPHER (Shaking head) You have a most dizzying intellect. What you just said, once again, is not very precise. Either the ideas are discounted or they are not. What do the words “pretty much discounted” truly mean except lack of real knowledge?

Since I can’t seem to get an answer to my question, let me ask this question in another way. Maybe this will work. How is that statement you made, that quantum inflation, an unproven theory which is the so-called currently well-accepted theory, is any different from someone believing the universe was created by a Creator?

ATHEIST That’s religion and not science. God has no proof of existence. Religion is based on culture and mysticism. It has no scientific basis.

PHILOSOPHER You missed my question completely.

ATHEIST Religion is not science.

PHILOSOPHER Who said it was science? However, since you brought it up, answer this, are you saying people’s actual spiritual experiences do not count as knowledge. But quantum inflation, based on an unproven idea, existing in esoteric mathematical equations, does count as knowledge?

ATHEIST Hey, are you a religious person? You know if you are, then I know you have certain beliefs you believe in and that facts make no difference to you. Maybe we ought to pass on.

PHILOSOPHER Then pass on. It is not I who intruded on you. Nor is it I who am dogmatic, close minded, and intellectually muddled.

ATHEIST I am not close minded or muddled. Look, if you do not start quoting Adam and Eve, and Noah, and miracles and all that stuff, then I’ll stay. But one word of religion and I’m gone.

PHILOSOPHER It is not I who brought up religion.

ATHEIST Yes you did, you said the universe is created by God.

PHILOSOPHER Help! Please listen carefully. I asked you simply how the truth basis of these 2 different ideas was different.

ATHEIST So, no religion, right.

PHILOSOPHER (Sighing) All religions are based on faith, and with great honesty, they say so. In our entire conversation, you have made many faith based statements, and not stated so. I would say you need to take your own advice.

ATHEIST I have not.

PHILOSOPHER (Quickly and forcefully like Perry Mason) You haven't? Tell me. How is your statement of belief in quantum inflation being the cause of the creation of the universe any different from someone saying the universe was created by a Creator?

Precisely speaking, both statements require a step of acceptance, or faith.

So, now I will ask you once again. You need to think carefully as you answer this question.

Do you accept the current idea of quantum inflation as your sacred and inalterable belief in how the universe came into existence?

ATHEIST Hell no!

PHILOSOPHER So then tell me and the world, what exactly caused the universe come into being?

ATHEIST I don't know!

PHILOSOPHER Thank you. Neither do I.

ATHEIST Holy crap, what am I saying. You tricked me.

PHILOSOPHER No, I only exposed what you accepted by faith and made into fact in your own mind a long time ago.

ATHEIST I don't get it.

PHILOSOPHER You will. Ok now, let's see if you've learned anything. What is the meaning of life?

ATHEIST Its procrreeeaaaa.... Its, uhmmm.

PHILOSOPHER (Smiling) Welcome to my world!

ATHEIST (In disbelief) So, you believe in nothing?

PHILOSOPHER No, it is you who believe in nothing and yet know everything. I believe in everything and know nothing.

ATHEIST That makes no sense. I don't understand.

PHILOSOPHER You will. You will.

Next episode – The Philosopher and the Atheist in “Nothingness Becomes Somethingness”