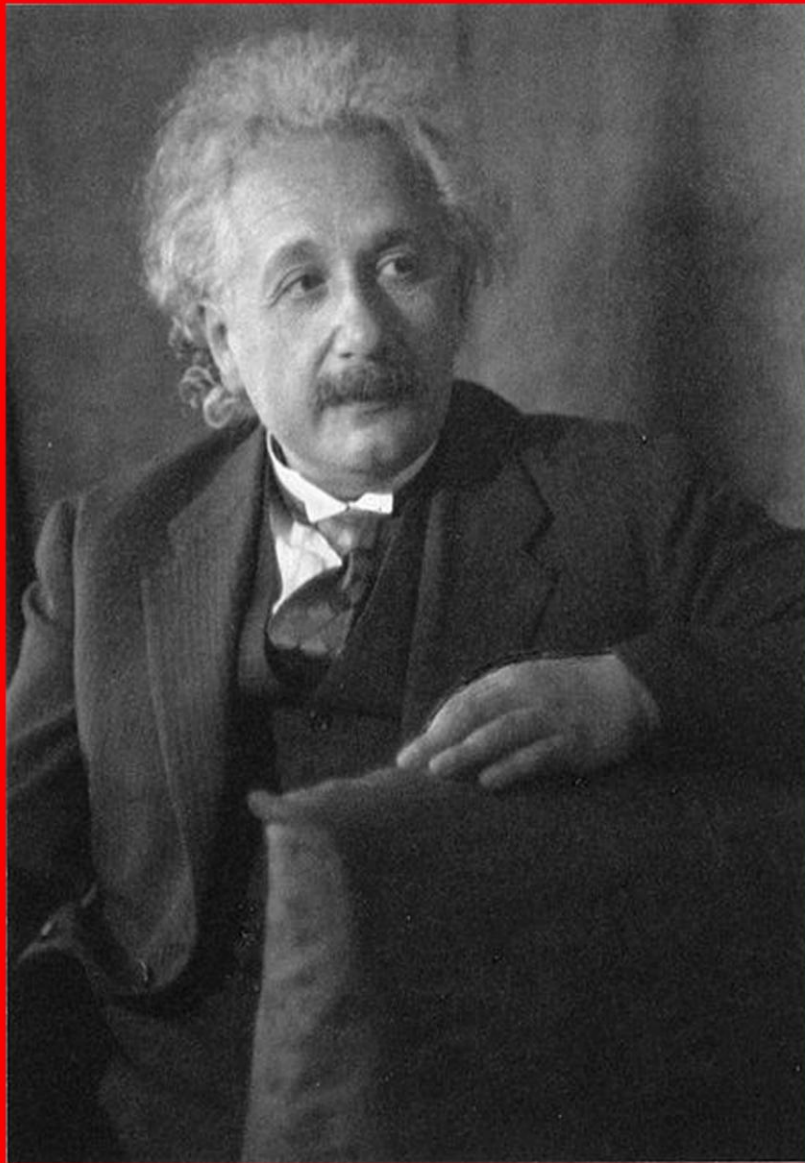


Albert Einstein and Deism



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by Bob Johnson

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Albert Einstein Was Deistic, Not Religious Nor Atheistic

“The religion that fears science, insults God and commits suicide.”
– Ralph Waldo Emerson

Albert Einstein is one of the greatest minds known to humanity. Not only did he give us a better understanding of the Universe by helping us to increase our knowledge of the laws and designs in Nature, he was also a very honest and objective man who sincerely cared about and appreciated all of humanity.

Because of his giant stature as a person of science as well as that of a humanitarian, different groups have tried, and still try, to claim him as one of them even though he does not belong to them.

One group is the Atheists. I occasionally read articles or online posts which claim Einstein was an Atheist and did not believe in God.

In Einstein's own words we see he definitely was not an Atheist and did not appreciate their claims to the contrary. He said, “In view of such harmony in the cosmos which I, with my limited human mind, am able to recognize, there are yet people who say there is not God. But what really makes me angry is that they quote me for support of such views.”¹

Einstein's views on God upset both Atheists and religious people. On August 7, 1940 he stated, “I was barked at by numerous dogs who are earning their food guarding ignorance and superstition for the benefit of those who profit from it. Then there are the fanatical atheists whose intolerance is of the same kind as the intolerance of the religious fanatics and comes from the same source. They are like slaves who are still feeling the weight of their chains which they have thrown off after hard struggle. They are creatures who – in their grudge against the traditional 'opium for the people' – cannot bear the music of the spheres. The Wonder of nature does not become smaller because one cannot measure it by the standards of human moral and human aims.”

Pantheists also falsely make claim that Albert Einstein was one of them. However, Einstein's own words show this is not the case. Einstein [wrote](#), ““I'm not an atheist, and I don't think I can call myself a pantheist. We are in the position of a little child entering a huge library filled with books in many languages. The child knows someone must have written those books. It does not know how. It does not understand the languages in which they are written. The child dimly suspects a mysterious order in the arrangement of the books but doesn't know what it is. That, it seems to me, is the attitude of even the most intelligent human being toward God. We see the universe marvelously arranged and obeying certain laws but only dimly understand these laws. Our limited minds grasp the mysterious force that moves the constellations.”

Religious Jews also often try to claim Einstein as one of theirs. This, also, is factually wrong as very

1 Max Jammer, *Einstein and Religion* (Princeton University Press, 1999), 97

many of Einstein's own words make crystal clear.

Regarding a visit he made to Palestine (now occupied Palestine/Israel) where he went to the Wailing Wall in Jerusalem, Einstein wrote about the Jews praying in their customer comical fashion in which they sway and repeatedly lean forward and then stand upright again and again. He wrote, "Where dull-witted clansmen of our tribe were praying aloud, their faces turned to the wall, their bodies swaying to and fro. A pathetic sight of men with a past but without a future." (It's interesting to note that the father of the war-mongering neoconservative movement, the Jew Leo Strauss, [wrote](#), "Judaism is a concern with return; it is not a concern with progress. 'Return' can easily be expressed in biblical Hebrew; 'progress' cannot.")

Einstein's "God Letter"

Albert Einstein's famous "God letter" is often used by Atheists who promote the idea that Einstein did not believe in God. Even the mainstream media [assumes](#) the letter shows Einstein doubted God's existence. However, looking at this revealing and important document objectively we see Einstein was writing against the idea of God as believed and expressed in the "revealed"/hearsay religions, and in particular, the idea of God held by and promoted by Judaism.

The Jewish philosopher and author Erik Gutkind had recently written a book, [Choose Life: The Biblical Call to Revolt](#) (PDF). The letter that has come to be known as the "God letter" is Albert Einstein's letter to Gutkind addressing Gutkin's book. Einstein [wrote](#), "Still, without Brouwer's suggestion I would never have gotten myself to engage intensively with your book because it is written in a language inaccessible to me. The word God is for me nothing more than the expression and product of human weakness, the Bible a collection of honorable, but still purely primitive, legends which are nevertheless pretty childish." Taken in context it seems obvious that Einstein was writing to Gutkind about the Bible god of Judaism and not about Nature's God.

Choose Life: The Biblical Call to Revolt is a book which promotes Israel and Jews above all of humanity, much as the Hebrew Bible/Old Testament does and similar to Leo Strauss and the neoconservative movement as mentioned above. Gutkind ignores the unreasonable (and, therefore, ungodly) claims in the Bible and in vain attempts to show that Judaism and the Hebrew Bible/Old Testament are in agreement with science. He then contradicts realities of science when he claims that Abraham removed himself and the Jews/Hebrews from natural causation. He wrote on page 61 that because Abraham was willing to kill his only son as the Bible god ordered him to do that Abraham was now "freed from natural causation" and "had detached himself and with him the Founded People from 'normalcy.' He had accepted the paradox. He had become the creator of faith." This type of religious nonsense Albert Einstein strongly and openly rejected throughout his life. In fact, Einstein wrote, "The scientist is possessed by the sense of universal causation. His religious feeling takes the form of a rapturous amazement at the harmony of natural law, which reveals an intelligence of such superiority that, compared with it, all the systematic thinking and acting of human beings is an utterly insignificant reflection." This flies in the face of Gutkind's lame claim that Abraham freed himself and the Jews ("Founded People") from "natural causation."

In the "God Letter" Einstein also covered the Hebrew Bible/Old Testament claim that the

Hebrews/Jews are chosen by God “above all people that are upon the face of the earth” ([Deuteronomy 7:6](#)) when he wrote, “For me the Jewish religion like all other religions is an incarnation of the most childish superstition. And the Jewish people to whom I gladly belong ... have no different quality for me than all other people. As far as my experience goes, they are also no better than other human groups, although they are protected from the worst cancers by a lack of power. Otherwise I cannot see anything 'chosen' about them.” (Sadly, now that Israel is a nuclear power, we see it is the bully of the Middle East. Israel has the power and uses/abuses that power to take what does not belong to it in regards to Palestinian lands. It exhibits “the worst cancers” by its abuse of Palestinian people and acts of state terror such as the murder of the American activist Rachel Corrie and the persecution of the man who warned the world about Israel's growing nuclear arsenal, Mordechai Vanunu.)

The above quote is in line with this prior quote by Einstein which show's he was able to free himself from Judaism and “revealed” religion at an early age. It reads, "Thus I came...to a deep religiosity, which, however, reached an abrupt end at the age of 12. Through the reading of popular scientific books I soon reached a conviction that much in the stories of the Bible could not be true....Suspicion against every kind of authority grew out of this experience...an attitude which has never left me."

Albert Einstein's Deistic Beliefs

From the quotes directly from Einstein himself which demonstrate a Deistic belief in God which are found above we can add these quotes:

"My religion consists of a humble admiration of the illimitable superior spirit who reveals himself in the slight details we are able to perceive with our frail and feeble minds. That deeply emotional conviction of the presence of a superior reasoning power, which is revealed in the incomprehensible universe, forms my idea of God."

"I cannot imagine a God who rewards and punishes the objects of his creation, whose purposes are modeled after our own - a God, in short, who is but a reflection of human frailty. It is enough for me to contemplate the mystery of conscious life perpetuating itself through all eternity, to reflect upon the marvelous structure of the universe which we can dimly perceive and to try humbly to comprehend even an infinitesimal part of the intelligence manifested in Nature."

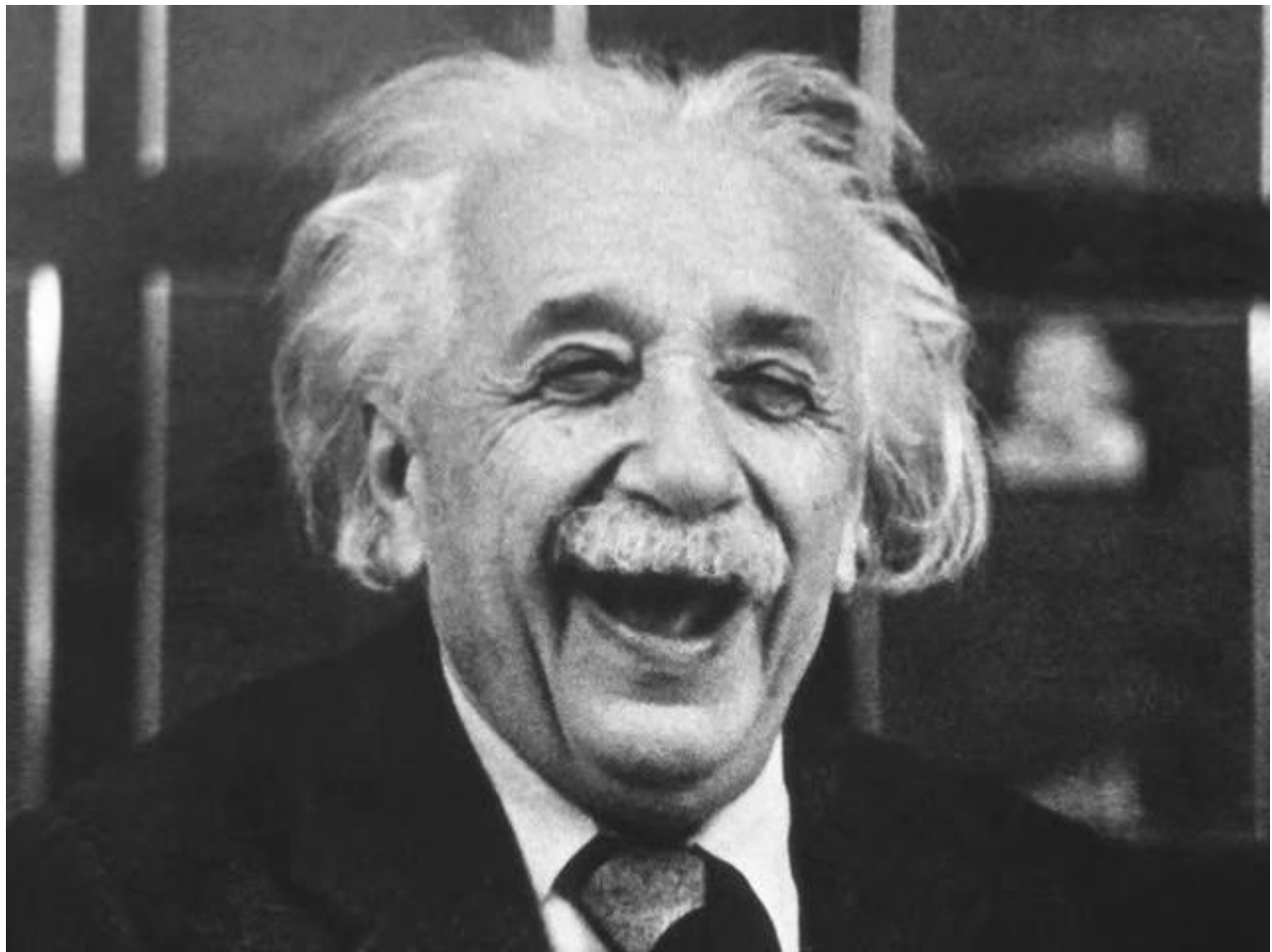
"The scientist is possessed by the sense of universal causation. His religious feeling takes the form of a rapturous amazement at the harmony of natural law, which reveals an intelligence of such superiority that, compared with it, all the systematic thinking and acting of human beings is an utterly insignificant reflection."

In the landmark book *Einstein: His Life and Universe* by Walter Isaacson we read on page 385 that Einstein had a “deistic concept of God.” This is backed up by Einstein's writings and comments throughout his life, with only some of them being mentioned in this eBooklet.

Add to this the fact that some of Albert Einstein's fellow scientists were themselves influenced by Einstein's Deism and it is clear Einstein's views and beliefs in God are Deistic. One such fellow

scientist is Walter Kohn, an American theoretical physicist and winner of the 1998 Nobel Prize for chemistry. Kohn wrote, "I am very much a scientist, and so I naturally have thought about religion also through the eyes of a scientist. When I do that, I see religion not denominationally, but in a more, let us say, deistic sense. I have been influenced in my thinking by the writing of Einstein who has made remarks to the effect that when he contemplated the world he sensed an underlying Force much greater than any human force. I feel very much the same. There is a sense of awe, a sense of reverence, and a sense of great mystery."

Happy and Joyful Einstein



Knowledge that you are not being played for a fool by the clergy or other authority figures gives one a great feeling and profound natural sense of joy and happiness. The American founder and Deist Thomas Paine recognized this fact and expressed it in [The Age of Reason, The Complete Edition](#) (for Kindle edition click [here](#)), when he wrote "But when the divine gift of reason begins to expand itself in the mind and calls man to reflection, he then reads and contemplates God and His works, and not in the

books pretending to be revelation. The creation is the Bible of the true believer in God. Everything in this vast volume inspires him with sublime ideas of the Creator. The little and paltry, and often obscene, tales of the Bible sink into wretchedness when put in comparison with this mighty work.

“The Deist needs none of those tricks and shows called miracles to confirm his faith, for what can be a greater miracle than the creation itself, and his own existence?”

“There is a happiness in Deism, when rightly understood, that is not to be found in any other system of religion. All other systems have something in them that either shock our reason, or are repugnant to it, and man, if he thinks at all, must stifle his reason in order to force himself to believe them.”

Likewise, Einstein had a joyous outlook on life. For example he wrote, “Joy in looking and comprehending is nature's most beautiful gift.” And he encouraged us to share the gift of joy with children when he wrote, “It is the supreme art of the teacher to awaken joy in creative expression and knowledge.”

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