

SCIENCE, REASON, AND CONSCIENCE: A PHILOSOPHICAL JOURNEY FROM THE CHAIR TO THE CREATOR – 12

The exploration that began on the dusty surface of Mars is now being taken to a completely different dimension. The spacecraft that the three friends encounter drags them not only into the depths of the universe but also to the center of their own beliefs and doubts.

As the debate heats up, the Believer unveils the fallacies behind the claims of "natural processes" and "science will explain everything." In response, the Believer highlights the limitations of the scientific method and reveals the magnificent intelligence behind the perfect order in the universe.

Get ready, because in this chapter, the intersections between science, philosophy, and faith will emerge, minds will be opened, and hearts will be shaken. The Believer's striking examples and explanations invite you to seek the answer to this great question:

Is there a magnificent order in the universe caused by unconscious laws of nature, or is it the infinite power of a Creator who knows, sees, and governs everything?

Every school of thought contains a world within itself; every belief opens a separate world to a person. At the points where these worlds intersect, discussions, questions, and uncertainties arise. As we enter the twelfth chapter, I invite you to the very center of this intersection.

The discussions deepen, the arguments harden, and each is determined to defend its truth. In this dialogue, where science, faith, and philosophy are intertwined, you will participate not only with your mind but also with your heart. What answers will we find to the questions that will arise this time? Keep reading, because the dialogues in this chapter will make you rethink all the thought patterns you know.

Believer: You always talk about "scientific methods," "natural processes," the "inherent properties of matter," and "laws of nature." Let's examine each of these to better understand what they truly represent:

Scientific methods are systematic approaches used to understand and explain the natural world. Scientific knowledge is obtained through a process involving observation, experimentation, hypothesis formulation, testing, analyzing results, and developing theories.

The Seven Stages of the Scientific Method:

- 1. Observation:** A phenomenon or event in the natural world draws attention and arouses curiosity.
- 2. Question:** A question is posed regarding the observed phenomenon or event, which determines the purpose and direction of the research.
- 3. Hypothesis:** A hypothesis is formulated that could answer the question. The hypothesis must be testable and falsifiable.
- 4. Experiment/Observation:** Experiments are conducted, or observations are made to test the hypothesis. Experiments are conducted in a controlled environment, while observations are made in natural settings.

5. **Data Collection and Analysis:** The data obtained from experiments or observations are collected and analyzed. The analysis is crucial in determining whether the hypothesis is confirmed.
6. **Conclusion:** If the analysis confirms the hypothesis, it is tentatively accepted and may evolve into a theory. If not, a new hypothesis is formed, or changes are made to the existing one.
7. **Theory:** A hypothesis that has been repeatedly confirmed through experiments and observations may become a theory. Theories are **powerful tools** used to explain the natural world.

Let's apply the scientific method to the creation of a sculpture:

1. **Observation:** The presence of a sculpture draws attention, and curiosity arises about how it was made. The details, shape, and materials of the sculpture are observed.
2. **Question:** Two questions emerge about the creation of the sculpture:
 - a. Did the materials inside and around the sculpture create it?
 - b. Was the sculpture made by a sculptor?
3. **Hypothesis:** Two hypotheses are formulated:
 - **Hypothesis 1:** The sculpture was created by the materials inside and around it.
 - **Hypothesis 2:** The sculpture was made by a sculptor.
4. **Experiment/Observation:** Experiments or observations are made to test the hypotheses:
 - **Hypothesis 1:** The sculpture was created by the materials inside and around it.
 - **Experiment:** Examine whether the materials can organize themselves into the shape of a sculpture.
 - **Observation:** Observe whether similar materials in natural environments organize themselves in the same way. Evaluate whether these materials naturally take the form of a sculpture.
 - **Hypothesis 2:** The sculpture was made by a sculptor.
 - **Experiment:** Observe the process of a sculptor creating a sculpture. Examine the techniques, tools, and processes used in making the sculpture.
 - **Observation:** Compare the sculpture with other works created by human hands. Observe the similarities with other human-made sculptures.
5. **Data Collection and Analysis:**
 - **Data Collection:** The data obtained from experiments and observations for both hypotheses are collected. The ability of materials to create a sculpture independently and the process by which a sculptor creates a sculpture are recorded.
 - **Analysis:** The collected data are analyzed to determine whether the materials have the ability to organize themselves into a sculpture and to evaluate the similarities with the sculptor's works.

6. Conclusion:

- **Hypothesis 1:** Analysis of the data shows that the materials do not have the ability to organize themselves into a sculpture; the hypothesis is not confirmed.
- **Hypothesis 2:** Analysis of the data shows that creating a sculpture requires the knowledge, will, and skill of a sculptor, and the sculpture bears similarities to other human-made sculptures; the hypothesis is confirmed.

7. Theory:

- **Theory:** If "Hypothesis 2" is repeatedly confirmed through experiments and observations, a theory may be developed that the sculpture was made by a sculptor. This theory becomes a powerful tool to explain that complex structures like sculptures are created by human hands.

Conclusion: In evaluations made according to the stages of the scientific method, the hypothesis that the sculpture was made by a sculptor is confirmed because the materials do not have the ability to create complex and artistic structures on their own. This conclusion is reached using the systematic and analytical approach of the scientific method.

Atheist: I know where you're going with this—you're going to ask, "How did humans come to be?"

But there's a fundamental difference between a sculpture and a human: a sculpture is an inanimate object, whereas a human is a living organism. A sculpture has only a physical structure, but a human has physical, biological, mental, and spiritual dimensions.

The fact that a substance is organic and alive shows that it can exist through the interaction of biological systems, chemical systems, and reactions within itself and with external substances. To form a sculpture, it is enough for a substance like marble to be shaped by a sculptor. However, the formation of a human cannot be explained solely by the coming together of materials. **The human body is a complex biological system.**

Organic substances are primarily composed of elements like carbon, hydrogen, oxygen, and nitrogen. **Living organisms come into being through the complex organization of these organic substances.** The organic molecules present in living beings, such as proteins, nucleic acids, carbohydrates, and lipids, provide the structural and functional features necessary for life.

Living beings are complex systems that distinguish themselves from their environment, nourish themselves, grow, reproduce, and adapt to their surroundings. **The functioning of these complex systems is related not only to chemical reactions but also to biological processes such as genetic information, cellular organization, energy transformation, and homeostasis.**¹

For example, the chemical reactions within a cell are necessary for the cell to sustain life. However, the sequence and speed at which these reactions occur are controlled by the cell's genetic information. **The structure and function of the cell are also shaped by this genetic information.**

To fully understand life, it is necessary to combine knowledge from different disciplines such as biology, chemistry, physics, and even philosophy.

Believer: You said, "The chemical reactions within a cell are necessary for the cell to sustain life. However, the sequence and speed at which these reactions occur are controlled by the cell's

genetic information. The structure and function of the cell are also shaped by this genetic information." **It's clear that these reactions and genetic information do not have consciousness or will.** How can we attribute this existence to them?

Atheist: Yes, you're correct. The chemical reactions within the cell, genetic information, or other biological processes do not have consciousness or will of their own. **These processes occur as a result of physical and chemical interactions governed by the laws of nature.**

Life emerges not just from the assembly of matter and energy but also from their combination in a specific order and organization. This order and organization are encoded in the cell's genetic information and determine the structure, function, and behavior of the cell.

Now, you're going to ask me, "*So, how did this genetic information and cellular organization come into being?*" This is a question **that scientists have been working on for many years and still cannot fully answer.**

Believer: You said, "*The chemical reactions within the cell, genetic information, or other biological processes do not have consciousness or will of their own. These processes occur as a result of physical and chemical interactions governed by the laws of nature.*" You mentioned the laws of nature. When an architect designs a building, the architect draws up a plan and program and acts according to this plan. In this case, can we say that the building designed and executed this plan itself? Your statement implies this.

Atheist: You're right; there is some truth in your analogy. In the creation of a building, the architect's plan and program play a decisive role. However, there is a significant difference between the laws of nature and the architect's plan:

- **Architect's Plan:** It is the product of a conscious design. The architect uses knowledge, skill, and creativity to create the plan with a specific purpose in mind.
- **Laws of Nature:** They are **unconscious** and **purposeless**.² The laws of nature are fundamental principles that define the workings of the universe, and they are not aimed at any specific purpose. **Scientifically and philosophically, it is accepted that the laws of nature are not conscious or purposeful entities but simply describe the relationships between observable phenomena.**

The laws of nature determine how physical and chemical processes operate. However, there is no consciousness or will driving these processes to occur for a specific purpose. For example, the law of gravity causes objects to attract each other, but this force does not have a specific purpose; there is no conscious intention behind this gravitational force. The chemical reactions and genetic information within the cell also function according to the laws of nature. These processes enable the cell to sustain life and reproduce.

Believer: "*Laws of Nature: They are unconscious and purposeless*" and "*The laws of nature determine how physical and chemical processes operate. However, there is no consciousness or will driving these processes to occur for a specific purpose.*" **Hearing these words from you gives me a bit of relief.** However, I don't understand and am saddened by your attributing the conscious and purposeful activities in the universe to the laws of nature, even though you acknowledge that they are unconscious and purposeless. **How can you ascribe the intricate structure and organization in living beings, which necessitate the belief in a conscious design, to a purposeless and unconscious nature? How logical and scientific is this?**

You often say, "*Faith cannot be validated by scientific methods.*" But how should we understand this viewpoint? Even when an act of terror occurs, people speculate, "*This man is just a pawn. Who is behind him?*" Or, if you see a marvelous work of art, how much would you believe if someone told you it was created **by a mentally impaired person**?

Yet the situation is quite simple: The materials themselves do not have the properties necessary to carry out the actions they perform. This is a definitive result. Whether they are living or inanimate, since we see that the materials are acting, we must accept that there is an unseen hand at work.

You say, "*There are laws in nature, and all activities happen because of them.*" We agree, and indeed, this is how things work. **The universe operates under these laws, and even your use of the term "*law*" indicates that there is order.** Can this order be realized by the unconscious and mindless laws of nature?

Certainly, order reveals the one who creates it. **The one who performs these actions informs us of how they are done through the laws, just as an architect shows how he is building a structure by drawing up a plan.** When we see a plan, we understand how the architect is doing these things, and when we see software, we understand the programmer's intentions. In every case, the software or laws in the universe that you call "laws of nature" show us how the Creator of this universe is doing, has done, and continues to do these things.

The laws of nature, or the laws of creation, as you call them, are like a chalkboard on which the Creator explains how He performs His work. Everyone knows that a plan written on paper cannot perform actions, nor can a written law execute anything. **These plans, programs, laws, and software are indicators of the artist or lawmaker, as well as the system and order that explain how these actions are carried out.**

Look at how Bediüzzaman Said Nursi defines nature and the laws of nature in his original work, "The Treatise on Nature":

"... within the domain of possibility, the divine destiny is like a writing board that can be erased and rewritten, a record book of the divine power's laws of action, referred to erroneously and mistakenly as 'nature,' and a catalog of the works of the divine artistry..."¹³

After this excellent definition, he concludes the matter with the following statements:

"... Lift your head out of the swamp of nature and look behind you; from atoms to planets, all beings, in various languages, testify and point with their fingers to a Creator of Infinite Glory... see the manifestation of the Eternal Designer who designed the palace and wrote the program in that record..."¹⁴

Atheist: We see that all phenomena in the universe occur through natural processes. Just as we can explain all phenomena through natural processes, such an explanation is also a scientific one.

The Agnostic, who had been listening to the Atheist's views with great satisfaction, nodded with a smile as if in agreement. Seeing their **stubbornness**, the Believer shook his head from side to side and took a deep breath, continuing his words with patience:

Believer: You are pushing me to delve into technical subjects that might be difficult for the audience to understand. You want to open a discussion on topics like "*natural processes*" and "*living organisms*." However, I preferred to make explanations with simple analogies that everyone can understand.

Perhaps you think that I cannot address these topics or that I am not capable of discussing such subjects. Do not worry; I believe that I am much more knowledgeable than you in these matters and that I can explain them better. However, because they involve very technical terms, I have tried to avoid entering these subjects for the sake of the audience.

Since you want to open this subject, **then be prepared**. Moreover, I want to tell you this: I will prove to you that what you call "**natural processes**" are actually impossible occurrences and that the formations in the universe are "**biological wonders**" or even "**miracles**." Will you surrender once I succeed in doing so?

The Believer finished his words and fixed his gaze on the Atheist. The Believer's words caused a deep silence in the room. Everyone held their breath, their eyes wide open. The Believer's assertive words even piqued the interest of the Agnostic. There was only one question in everyone's mind: Could these claims really push the boundaries of science and philosophy to provide a compelling proof? You are eagerly anticipating what will happen in the next phase of this discussion, aren't you? As the tension between the three friends rises, we will search together for the answers to those great questions that no one wants to miss. See you in the thirteenth chapter.

¹ **Homeostasis** is the process by which an organism maintains a stable and balanced internal environment. Despite being exposed to constantly changing external factors, our bodies keep many internal factors (such as temperature, pH, blood sugar, and water balance) within specific limits through homeostasis. This balance is critical for the organism's health and survival. Homeostasis is necessary for the healthy functioning of the organism, and many biological mechanisms come into play to maintain this balance.

² Below are some more recent scientific sources and academic studies that support the statements: "Laws of Nature: They are unconscious and purposeless. The laws of nature are fundamental principles that define the workings of the universe, and they are not aimed at any specific purpose."

1. "**The Big Picture: On the Origins of Life, Meaning, and the Universe Itself**" by Sean Carroll (2016):
2. "**The Atheist's Guide to Reality: Enjoying Life without Illusions**" by Alex Rosenberg (2010):
3. "**The God Delusion**" by Richard Dawkins (2006):
4. "**Sapiens: A Brief History of Humankind**" by Yuval Noah Harari (2014):
5. "**The Blind Watchmaker**" by Richard Dawkins (1986):
6. "**A Brief History of Time**" by Stephen Hawking (1988):
7. "**The Grand Design**" by Stephen Hawking and Leonard Mlodinow (2010):

These sources represent a scientific and philosophical perspective that argues the laws of nature are unconscious and purposeless, and that they define the fundamental principles governing the workings of the universe without being directed towards any purpose.

³ From the Risale-i Nur Collection by Bediuzzaman Said Nursi the Flashes 185: Twenty-Third Flash (The Treatise on Nature) / THIRD WORD / Third Impossibility / First Example

⁴ From the Risale-i Nur Collection by Bediuzzaman Said Nursi the Flashes 185: Twenty-Third Flash (The Treatise on Nature) / THIRD WORD / Third Impossibility / First Example