

SCIENCE, REASON AND CONSCIENCE: A PHILOSOPHICAL JOURNEY FROM THE CHAIR TO THE CREATOR – 18

Up to this point, the dialogues have explored various perspectives on the existence of the universe, with the Believer's profound and thought-provoking explanations raising new questions in the listeners' minds. His desire to uncover the meaning behind events stirred excitement and curiosity among the audience. The Deist, in particular, found himself driven to an internal reckoning, prompted by this unique perspective to reassess his beliefs about the order of the universe and the Creator's role within it.

On one hand, the Believer's systematic explanations opened new horizons for the listeners; on the other, they invited everyone to embark on an inner journey to delve deeper into the mystery behind creation. Now, everyone in the room eagerly anticipated the Believer's more comprehensive insights into the continuity of order in the universe.

In this chapter, the Believer will critique the Deist's view of a Creator who is positioned as the "**prime cause**" but then leaves the universe to run on its own. Using Bediüzzaman Said Nursi's compelling analogies,¹ he will open a new door to demonstrate that the order in the universe is not merely the result of an initial system set into motion but rather requires ongoing, conscious intervention at every moment.

Believer: Look, Bediüzzaman uses the analogy of a clock and a clockmaker and says:

"Is it easier for a clockmaker to craft the components of a clock, assemble and regulate the clock himself? Or is it easier for him to create a more intricate machine within the clock's components and entrust the construction of the clock to the lifeless hands of that machine?"

This statement carries profound logic. Would it be simpler for the clockmaker to arrange the gears of the clock himself, or to invent an even more complex machine (representing natural laws and processes) and delegate the task of building the clock to that unconscious machine?

In essence, this highlights once again that order cannot sustain itself independently. Through this analogy, Bediüzzaman demonstrates the necessity of continuous intervention to maintain a structured system, correcting the misunderstanding in the Deists' interpretation of the "**clockmaker**" analogy.

The Deist listened attentively, as each word of Bediüzzaman lit up his mind like a spark of light. He focused intently, raising his eyebrows thoughtfully, trying to grasp the deeper meaning behind the Believer's analogy. The Believer continued, elaborating further to clarify his point:

Believer: Let us explain Bediüzzaman Said Nursi's brilliant analogy in the logical steps you prefer:

STEP 1: "Is it easier for a clockmaker to craft the components of a clock, then assemble and regulate it?"

THE CLOCKMAKER BUILDING THE CLOCK

In this step, Bediüzzaman uses an analogy to illustrate how a direct Creator establishes the order in the universe.

Elements of the Analogy:

- **The Clockmaker:** Represents the Creator.
- **Gears and Cogs:** Represent the physical laws and functioning systems of the universe (natural laws and processes).
- **The Clock's Order:** To function perfectly, each cog and gear must be placed and calibrated with precise harmony.

Logical Stages:

1. The Necessity of Assembly:

- In Bediüzzaman's analogy, the clockmaker is a conscious being who designs and arranges every part of the clock with a specific purpose. Without the clockmaker, the clock cannot come into existence. Randomly scattered parts cannot form a meaningful whole without a designer and arranger.
- Similarly, every object and event in the universe appears shaped and organized according to a specific order, functioning seamlessly as part of a greater system. This necessitates the existence of a regulator.

2. Fulfilling a Purpose:

- The clockmaker's purpose is for the clock to accurately tell time. Thus, every part of the clock is adjusted to contribute to its functionality. All components are brought together in harmony to achieve this purpose.
- Likewise, the entities in the universe and the laws of nature operate in harmony to sustain the order of the cosmos. If there is a purpose in the universe, its fulfillment requires the intervention of a conscious regulator.

The Believer turned his gaze intently toward the Atheist. The depth in his eyes seemed to suggest that this logic was something the Atheist needed to grasp most clearly. As he looked at him, the calm yet resolute expression on his face emphasized the profound truth underlying his words.

Then, turning to the Agnostic, he continued. His eyes carried a look that implied the explanation was now so clear it left little room for doubt. To ensure the Agnostic could fully comprehend this example—one that would shake the very foundation of their questions—he repeated each point with deliberate care.

Each sentence from the Believer resonated in the listeners' minds, opening doors to new thoughts. The weight of his words filled the room with a profound silence. It was evident from the Agnostic's expression that he was grappling with deep confusion, stirred by the Believer's

arguments. Meanwhile, the Atheist and the Deist listened intently, as though hoping to find the truth they sought within his explanations.

The Believer proceeded with the first logical step in Bediüzzaman's argument:

Believer: Let's continue:

3. Conclusion: The Continuity of Order and the Need for Conscious Intervention

- According to Bediüzzaman, it is illogical to assume that a clock could come into existence simply by random assembly of its parts. Randomly arranged components cannot form a mechanism that functions with a specific purpose. Furthermore, for the clock to continue working and to accurately display time, it must be regularly maintained, adjusted, and corrected when necessary.
- The argument against Deist thought deepens here: The Deist view holds that the Creator brought the universe into existence and then withdrew from any further intervention. However, Bediüzzaman asserts that the ongoing, harmonious order of the universe cannot be sustained without the constant oversight of a conscious regulator. In the case of a clock, not only is the initial assembly required, but also continual supervision and intervention to ensure its components function in a consistent manner.
- If everything in the universe operates with a specific purpose, this is achieved not only through an initial setup but also through ongoing, conscious control and intervention. It is logically insufficient to claim that lifeless and unconscious natural laws could ensure such harmony independently. This demonstrates that a creative force is continuously involved in the universe, proving the inadequacy of the Deist idea that the universe was "left to its own devices."

At this stage, Bediüzzaman establishes that all components of the universe come together harmoniously within specific laws, a phenomenon only possible through the regulatory role of a Creator. He further clarifies that the order of the universe is not merely the result of an initial arrangement but also requires ongoing conscious oversight.

The Believer's words had captured the attention of everyone in the room. Each person was contemplating Bediüzzaman's powerful analogy, lost in the dimensions and profound meaning of the discussion. The Atheist and Agnostic fixed their gaze on the Believer, as if hoping to uncover in his words the truths they had long sought. For a fleeting moment, their expressions suggested a reevaluation of the Deist's view of the Creator as a "distant watchmaker." Thoughtful expressions appeared on both their faces, as they found themselves on the brink of discovery in their respective journeys of questioning.

The Deist clasped his hands in his lap and lowered his gaze in deep thought. He seemed to admire the Believer's elaboration of the analogy, particularly the continual connection between the watchmaker and his creation. While it seemed to strike a chord with him, he did not appear on the verge of questioning his own beliefs. Nevertheless, he carefully considered each of the Believer's sentences, weighing every word and trying to find meaning within his own worldview.

The room's silence mirrored the increasingly complex and profound dimensions of the discussion. At times, eyes focused on one spot, while at others they drifted into the distance. The Agnostic stared thoughtfully at the ceiling, lost in contemplation, while the Atheist, with hands clasped and eyes slightly narrowed, evaluated each argument with intense scrutiny.

The Deist, meanwhile, listened with a sense of respect, as if acknowledging the wisdom of the Believer. The admiration and curiosity in his gaze revealed the thoughtful stance he adopted in the face of Bediüzzaman's profound logic and knowledge. The words resonated in his mind, making him feel like a guest within these profound reflections.

After a brief pause, the Believer resumed his explanation of Bediüzzaman Said Nursi's analogy:

Believer: Now, let us move to the second step. Bediüzzaman asks:

STEP 2: "Or is it easier to create an extraordinary machine within the gears, then leave the assembly of the clock to the lifeless hands of that machine?"

THE MACHINE MAKING THE CLOCK ON ITS OWN

This second step delves deeper into the critique of Deist thought. According to Deism, the Creator set the universe in motion and withdrew, leaving it to function on its own. Bediüzzaman argues that this perspective is logically inconsistent.

Elements of the Analogy:

- **Extraordinary Machine:** Represents the functioning of the universe and natural laws. It symbolizes a highly intricate, dynamic, and perfectly ordered system.
- **Lifeless Gears and Hands:** Represent the notion of unconscious and will-less natural laws attempting to maintain order independently.

Logical Stages:

1. The Setup of the Extraordinary Machine: Is Initial Setup Sufficient?

Bediüzzaman describes the universe as an "extraordinary machine" of unparalleled complexity, precision, and harmony, where every part works seamlessly with the others.

- **Deist View:** Deists argue that a Creator set up this extraordinary machine and established the universe in perfect order at the beginning but has since ceased to intervene. In their view, the Creator left the universe functioning like a self-operating machine.
- **Bediüzzaman's Response:** According to Bediüzzaman, the idea that this extraordinary machine can operate perpetually on its own after being initially set up is flawed. A machine requires not only an initial assembly but also regular maintenance and continuous supervision to sustain its functionality. The delicate balance and intricate workings of the universe cannot continue without conscious intervention. If left unattended, the complexity and dynamism of such a machine would lead it to lose its harmony and malfunction.

2. Lifeless Hands: Can Unconscious Natural Laws Sustain Order?

Bediüzzaman uses the term "*lifeless hands*" to highlight the unconsciousness of natural laws and processes within the universe. These "*lifeless hands*" symbolize the physical laws and natural forces at play.

- **Deist View:** Deists believe that the extraordinary machine created by the Creator is sustained through natural laws. They argue that these unconscious laws are sufficient to maintain and protect the order of the universe.
- **Bediüzzaman's Response:** Bediüzzaman points out the logical contradiction in attributing intentional and purposeful action to unconscious and lifeless natural laws. If the order of the universe is controlled solely by these laws, they act as "*lifeless hands*," incapable of purpose or direction. It is unreasonable to expect unconscious laws to generate a coherent, purposeful order on their own. For the machine to function toward a specific purpose, its components require ongoing guidance—a conscious regulator. Thus, the movement and purpose of every part of the universe cannot be attributed solely to lifeless natural laws but instead point to the continuous intervention of a conscious Creator.

Bediüzzaman demonstrates that the harmony and order within the universe cannot be sustained by unconscious forces alone. Instead, it requires the constant involvement of a Creator, exposing the shortcomings of the Deist view that leaves the universe to operate independently after its creation.

The Atheist, Agnostic, and Deist seemed to embark on a mental journey as the silence in the room deepened. The Atheist leaned back slightly, gazing at the Believer with a contemplative expression, as if hoping to find answers to the questions occupying his mind. Noticing the Atheist's gaze, the Believer paused for a brief moment, focusing his eyes on him, as though he wished to help him better grasp the concepts being discussed. Then, with a deliberate shift, he turned his profound and meaningful gaze toward the Agnostic. The Agnostic, fully attentive and determined not to miss a single detail, seemed to feel as though he had found a guide capable of dispelling all his doubts.

After these silent but significant exchanges of glances, when the Believer began speaking again, everyone in the room focused on his words with heightened curiosity. It felt as if they were standing at the threshold of a door opening to the universe's profound secrets, and the Believer was about to push it ajar, offering them a new perspective.

Believer: *(Taking a deep breath)* Let us continue:

3. The Necessity of Constant Intervention: Is It Enough to Leave the Extraordinary Machine to Lifeless Hands?

In the final step, Bediüzzaman argues that entrusting the continuity of the universe's order to lifeless and unconscious natural laws is insufficient. His phrase "*leaving the extraordinary machine to lifeless hands*" underscores the inadequacy of relying on these forces alone to sustain the intricate harmony of the universe.

- **Deist View:** Deists believe that the extraordinary machine was set in motion by the Creator and that its operation continues under the governance of natural laws.

They assert that no further intervention from the Creator is required to maintain the functioning of the universe.

- **Bediüzzaman's Response:** According to Bediüzzaman, an initial setup alone is not sufficient for the extraordinary machine to sustain its operation. Each component of the machine must be continuously monitored and adjusted as needed to function correctly. Lifeless and unconscious natural laws cannot independently uphold the universe's complex harmony and precise workings. The continuity of the observable order in the universe depends not only on the initial setup but also on the constant involvement of a creative power. **Without this intervention, the universe, if left to itself, would inevitably descend into discord, disorder, and chaos.** Thus, for the universe to remain functional at all times, it requires the ongoing presence and control of a Creator.

Final Argument: Lifeless Hands and Unconscious Forces Cannot Logically Sustain Order

In light of these points, Bediüzzaman's response to Deist thought is as follows:

- If the universe were left to the control of unconscious natural laws and lifeless hands, these forces would be incapable of perpetuating the intricate order and delicate workings of the universe.
- Lifeless laws can neither achieve a purpose nor consciously maintain a specific order. The preservation and continuation of order by unconscious laws are only possible through the constant intervention of a creative power.
- **Therefore, the Deist notion that "the universe can function independently after its initial creation without any further intervention from the Creator" is logically inadequate. The universe's delicate balance requires not only an initial creation but also the ongoing, active presence of a Creator to sustain it.**

The silence in the room seemed to carry the weight of a profound search for meaning. Everyone felt on the verge of discovering a perspective on the universe they had never considered before, illuminated by the striking analogies presented by the Believer. Minds were drawn into deep contemplation, influenced by the vivid imagery evoked by Bediüzzaman's words. The Deist, trying to calm the thoughts stirred within him by these explanations, lowered his gaze—a subtle reflection of an inner reckoning.

At that moment, the Believer, as if signaling that he had much more to share, glanced around at everyone in the room. Yet, instead of speaking, a thoughtful smile appeared on his face. He paused briefly, adding an air of mystery to the silence. This small pause heightened the anticipation that already filled the room.

Finally, in a soft tone, almost as if speaking to himself, he murmured a few words:

Believer: Perhaps... the secrets of the universe are too profound to be grasped at first glance...

As these words resonated in the minds of everyone present, the Believer fell silent without saying another word. It was such a finely crafted sentence that no one could tell whether he intended to continue or not. The Deist, Agnostic, and Atheist exchanged meaningful glances, their growing curiosity hinting at questions that would have to wait for the next meeting to find answers.

And so, as this chapter came to an end, the silence left behind by the Believer felt like an answer in itself-an invitation to ask the most profound questions.

TO BE CONTINUED (GOD WILLING)

¹ **Analogy:** An analogy is a method of explaining or understanding a concept or situation by highlighting similarities between two different things. Unlike a metaphor, an analogy draws comparisons in a more detailed and structured way.

For example, the statement, "*The internet is like a library for finding information,*" is an analogy. Here, a similarity is established between the internet and a library in terms of accessing information. Analogies are used to make concepts more understandable and often serve an educational or explanatory purpose. Another example is: "*The brain functions like a computer.*" In this sentence, the similarity between how the brain and a computer process information is being explained.