

HABERMAS: You very kindly noted that our debates and discussions had influenced your move in the direction of theism. You mentioned that this initial influence contributed in part to your comment that naturalistic efforts have never succeeded in producing “a plausible conjecture as to how any of these complex molecules might have evolved from simple entities.” Then in your recently rewritten introduction to the forthcoming edition of your classic volume *God and Philosophy*, you say that the original version of that book is now obsolete. You mention a number of trends in theistic argumentation that you find convincing, like big bang cosmology, fine tuning & Intelligent Design arguments. Which arguments for God’s existence did you find most persuasive?

FLEW: The most impressive arguments for God’s existence are those that are supported by recent scientific discoveries. I’ve never been much impressed by the kalam cosmological argument, and I don’t think it has gotten any stronger recently. However, I think the argument to Intelligent Design is enormously stronger than it was when I first met it.

HABERMAS: So you like arguments such as those that proceed from big bang cosmology and fine tuning arguments?

FLEW: Yes.

HABERMAS: So of the major theistic arguments, such as the cosmological, teleological, moral, and ontological, the only really impressive ones that you take to be decisive are the scientific forms of teleology?

FLEW: Absolutely. It seems to me that Richard Dawkins constantly overlooks the fact that Darwin himself, in the fourteenth chapter of *The Origin of Species*, pointed out that his whole argument began with a being which already possessed reproductive powers. This is the creature the evolution of which a truly comprehensive theory of evolution must give some account. Darwin himself was well aware that he had **not** produced such an account. It now seems to me that the findings of more than fifty years of DNA research have provided materials for a new and enormously **powerful argument to design**.

Dr. Allan Sandage, the best-known astronomer in the world, is a scientist who accepted religion in later life. “It was my science that drove me to the conclusion that **the world is much more complicated than can be explained by science**. It is only through the supernatural that I can understand the mystery of existence.”

Physicists have realized certain indications that

space and life have a conscious purpose. Such as unchanging numbers, the power of the force of gravity, proton mass and the electrical force of the electron. If these were slightly different, atoms would come to a halt, the stars would not emit light and there would be no sign of life. “When you realize that the laws of nature must be incredibly finely tuned to produce the universe we see, that conspires to plant the idea that the universe did not just happen, but that there must be a purpose behind it.” These words belong to Kohn Polkinghorne, who had a distinguished career at Cambridge University before becoming an Anglican priest in 1982. Charles Townes, who shared the 1964 Nobel prize for discovering the principles of lasers, says: “Many have a feeling that somehow intelligence must have been involved in the laws of the universe.”

Russell says; “Quantum mechanics allows us to think of special divine action.” While many scientists expect miracles, the laws of physics reveal the intervention of the Creator. The physicist Mehdi Golshani of Tehran's Sharif University reads the Quran, believes “God’s signs in the universe” and studies them almost as a religious obligation. The Quran wants people to “travel in the earth, then see how He initiated the creation.” According to Golshani, research “is a worship act, in that it reveals more of the wonders of God’s creation.” The same strain runs through Judaism. Carl Feit puts it this way: “The only pathway to achieve a love of God is by understanding the works of His Hand, which is the natural universe. Knowing how the universe functions is crucial to a religious person because this is the world He created.”

In the face of all the scientific developments outlined above, the acceptance of intelligent design by Flew, famous for defending atheism for many years, reflects a final scene in the process of collapse being undergone by atheism. Modern science has revealed the existence of an “intelligence pervading the universe,” thus leaving atheism out of the equation. Scientific research into both the functioning of the cell and the subatomic particles of matter has revealed this fact in an indisputable manner: Life and the universe were brought into being from nothing by the will of an entity possessed of superior wisdom. There is no doubt that the possessor of that knowledge and mind that pervade the universe at all levels is God. “**Both East & West belong to God, so wherever you turn, the Face of God is there. God is All-Encompassing, All-Knowing.**” (2:115)

What, as Muslims, have we learnt. It is that our debates & discussions must be driven by scientific education. Urgent! Iqra! Be of those who Think! “Do they **not** look at the sky above them? How We have built it & adorned it, and there are no rifts therein?” (Quran 50:6)

Scientific World is turning to God

Nature’s flawless harmonies & the delights and liabilities of our human environment, with its diverse & delicate relationships, are invested with religious significance. Created nature is a cryptogram of a reality which transcends it: nature is a text to be deciphered. Evidences accumulating in the material and social worlds and in the horizons jointly point to a hidden immaterial order.

In his book “*The Hidden Face of God*,” Gerald Schroeder, one of the creationist scientists who influenced Anthony Flew (an atheist) to change his mind, writes: “A single consciousness, a universal wisdom, pervades the universe. The discoveries of science, those that search the quantum nature of subatomic matter, have moved us to the brink of a startling realization: all existence is the expression of this wisdom. In the laboratories we experience it as information that first physically articulated as energy and then condensed into the form of matter. Every particle, every being, from atom to human, **appears to represent a level of information, of wisdom.**” He marvelously ties the wonders of life to the wisdom of God

As people have certainly been
influenced by me,
I want to try & correct
the enormous
Damage
I may have done.

These were the regret-filled words by Anthony Flew, in his time a well-known atheist philosopher. Flew chose to become an atheist at the age of 15. He made a name for himself in the academic field with a paper published in 1950. In the 54 years that followed, he defended atheism as a teacher at the universities of Oxford, Aberdeen, Keele & Reading, & at many American/Canadian universities. However, Flew has announced that he has abandoned this error & accepts that the universe was created. The decisive factor in this radical change of view is the clear & definitive evidence revealed by science on the subject of creation.

Let's revisit the past. It is already known that almost all the founders of diverse scientific branches believed in God and His divine books. The greatest physicists in history, Newton, Faraday, Kelvin and Maxwell are a few examples of such scientists.

In the time of Isaac Newton, the great physicist, scientists believed that the movements of the heavenly bodies and planets could be explained by different laws. Nevertheless, Newton believed that the creator of earth and space was the same, and therefore they had to be explained by the same laws. He said: "This most beautiful system of the sun, planets, and comets could only proceed from the counsel and dominion of an intelligent and powerful Being. This Being governs all things, not as the soul of the world, but as Lord over all, and on account of His dominion. He is wont to be called Lord God, Universal Ruler."

As is evident, thousands of scientists who have been doing research in the fields of physics, mathematics, and astronomy since the Middle-Ages all agree on the idea that the universe is created by a single Creator and always focus on the same point. The founder of physical

astronomy, Johannes Kepler, stated his strong belief in God in one of his books where he wrote: "Since we astronomers are priests of the highest God in regard to the book of nature, it befits us to be thoughtful, not of the glory of our minds, but rather, above all else, of the glory of God." (Dan Graves, Scientists of Faith, p. 51)

The great physicist, William Thompson (Lord Kelvin), who established thermo-dynamics on a formal scientific basis, was also a Christian who believed in God. He had strongly opposed Darwin's theory of evolution and totally rejected it. In 1903, short before his death, he made the unequivocal statement that, "With regard to the origin of life, science...positively affirms creative power." (David Darling, Deep Time, Delacorte Press, 1989).

Flew realised, in the face of the information-based complexity of life, that the true origin of life is intelligent design and that the atheism he had espoused for 66 years was a discredited philosophy. Flew announced the scientific reasons underlying this change in belief in these terms: "Biologists' investigation of DNA has shown, by the almost unbelievable complexity of the arrangements which are needed to produce [life], that intelligence must have been involved." "It has become inordinately difficult even to begin to think about constructing a naturalistic theory of the evolution of that first reproducing organism." "I have been persuaded that it is simply out of the question that the first living matter evolved out of dead matter and then developed into an extraordinarily complicated creature."

The DNA research which Flew cites as a fundamental reason for his change of opinion has indeed revealed striking facts about creation. The helix shape of the DNA molecule, its possession of the genetic code, the nucleotide strings that refute blind chance, the storage of encyclopaedic quantities of information and other striking findings have revealed that the structure and functions of this molecule were arranged for life with a special design. Comments by scientists concerned with DNA research bear witness to this fact.

Francis Crick, for instance, one of the scientists who revealed the helix shape of DNA admitted in the face of the findings regarding DNA that the origin of life indicated a miracle: An honest man, armed with all the knowledge available to us now, could only state that in some sense, the origin of life appears at the moment to be almost a miracle, so many are the conditions which would have had to have been satisfied to get it going.

Based on his calculations, Led Adleman of the University of Southern California in Los Angeles has stated that **one gram of DNA** can store as much information as **a trillion compact discs**. Gene Myers, a scientist employed on the Human Genome Project, has said the following in the face of the miraculous arrangements he witnessed: "What really astounds me is the architecture of life...The system is extremely complex. **It's like it was designed**... There's a huge intelligence there."

The most striking fact about DNA is that the existence of the coded genetic information can definitely not be explained in terms of matter and energy or natural laws. Dr. Gitt, a professor at the German Institute of Physics & Technology, has said this on the subject: "**A code system is always the result of a mental process**... It should be emphasized that matter as such is unable to generate any code. All experiences indicate that a thinking being voluntarily exercising his own free will, cognition, and creativity, is required... There is no known natural law through which matter can give rise to information, neither is any physical process or material phenomenon known that can do this." Muslims know this "mental process" as "Be" and it is. The "thinking being" is God.

Flew had debates with scientists & philosophers who were proponents of creation, and exchanged ideas with them. The final turning point in that process was a discussion organised by the Institute for Metascientific Research in Texas in May, 2003. Flew participated together with author Roy Varghese, Israeli physicist and molecular biologist Gerald Schroeder, & Catholic philosopher John Haldane. Flew was impressed by the weight of the scientific evidence in favour of creation and by the convincing nature of his opponents' arguments, and abandoned atheism as an idea in the period following that discussion. In a letter he wrote for the Aug-Sept, 2003, edition of the British magazine *Philosophy Now*, he recommended Schroeder's book "*The Hidden Face of God: Science Reveals the Ultimate Truth*" and Varghese's book "*The Wonderful World*." During an interview with the professor of philosophy and theology Gary R. Habermas, who also played a major role in his change of mind, and also on the video "Has Science Discovered God?," he openly stated that he believed in intelligent design.

Quran is indeed Exalted, Full of Wisdom.

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