

What Atheism Cannot Explain

"I am the first and I am the last; besides me there is no God." (Isaiah 44:6b)

Whenever scientists are confronted by natural phenomena,¹ they aren't satisfied to just dismiss out-of-hand the hypotheses (educated speculations) that others propose, but rather they seek to offer *superior* explanations. Simply rejecting the views of others is a *sub*-scientific endeavor while positively reconciling the evidence into a theory fulfills the ultimate goal of scientific investigation. Since skeptics habitually dismiss Christian claims concerning the providence of God it is consequently appropriate to expect from them an accounting for the following body of phenomena on naturalistic grounds:

1. **The universe had an absolute beginning from out of nothing at the Big Bang²** in a manner that is consistent with Genesis 1:1. Atheists cannot appeal to *scientific* causes since, prior to the Big Bang, neither space, time, matter, nor energy existed by which *scientific* events could happen. Speculations by theoretical physicists about the potential existence of prior universes likewise cannot be tested scientifically. The cause of the universe therefore was the God of the Bible.
2. **The initial creation exhibited a plethora of extremely-high fine-tuning characteristics** with respect to the structure of the strong and weak nuclear forces within the atom, the strength of gravity, and the electro-magnetic force, all of which have been necessary to yield a universe that has the capacity to support life.³ Since these factors were present at the very beginning, they cannot, by definition, be the result of evolutionary processes.
3. **The presence of a genetic code within the DNA of the oldest and most primitive forms of life.** Bill Gates describes DNA as *"like a Computer Program but far, far, more advanced than any software ever created."*⁴ Furthermore, genomic research indicates that *"not even [the most primitive of life forms] a parasite...can survive without at least 250 functioning gene products."*⁵ Just a single uncoiled gene would extend thousands of miles and contain information that would require hundreds of telephone books to hold it if each letter represented a single base-pair.⁶
4. **Personal Consciousness.** The reality of both our awareness of ourselves and our perceptions of other phenomena through our senses, coupled with our capacity to distinguish the two, is an aspect of our nature that is easily reconcilable with being intentionally formed by an Intelligent God *"in His own image"* (Genesis 1:26). On the other hand, devotees to materialism cannot account for consciousness which utterly transcends⁷ mere physical matter (I can appreciate a rock; but that rock does not return the favor).
5. **Personal Free-Will (in the Ontological Sense).**⁸ One tenet of philosophical materialism (the view that neither God, nor souls, but only physical matter exists) is that our perceptions of making choices are illusory for the reasons that, as solely physical entities, they are merely the result of electro-chemical firings of the interactions between the synapses in our neural system. Yet such a view both utterly defies reality and leads to logical incoherence. After all, since this view, if

¹ A "phenomenon" is a fact or situation that is observed to exist or occur, such as the landing of an airplane.

² William Lane Craig. *Reasonable Faith* 3rd ed. (Crossways, 2008), p. 126f.

³ Hugh Ross. *The Creator and the Cosmos* 4th ed. (RTB, 2018), p. 233f.

⁴ Bill Gates. *The Road Ahead*.

⁵ Hugh Ross. *Creation as Science: A Testable Model Approach to End Creation/Evolution Wars*. NavPress, 2006), p. 127.

⁶ YouTube.com. *The Open University*. "The Information in DNA-DNA, RNA, and Protein Formation." July 26, 2011.

⁷ To transcend is to exist outside of a phenomenon that is under consideration, e.g. Christians say God stands outside of nature as its creator.

⁸ By "ontology" is meant the features of our nature as opposed to our social circumstances.

actually true, applies not only to the professors who teach these notions, but to students who are expected to understand them. Astrophysicist John Polkinghorne has stated about the materialistic view that, *“Thought is replaced by electrochemical neural events [which are] neither right nor wrong. The world of rational discourse dissolves into the absurd chatter of firing synapses. Quite frankly that cannot be right and none of us believes it to be so.”*⁹ Consequently, the notion of free-will is a brute reality that must be accounted for. The Christian finds a sufficient cause for such free-will in the God of the Bible who freely knows and acts according to His own purposes. The non-theist, by contrast, is a hostage to the logical ramification that free-agent personality cannot arise from “law-abiding” mindless physical entities and events.

Through the prophet Isaiah, the Lord God said, *“To whom then will you compare me...’ says the Holy One. “Life up your eyes and see: who created these?”* (Isaiah 40:25-26a). In public debates I have, for example, raised the question to my opponents as to how they account for the beginning of the cosmos out of nothing at the Big Bang. They replied either that a scientific answer would be sure to come in the future, or simply, that any notion of a “god-answer” would be a “non-starter.” Yet neither offered a view that accounted for the brute scientific facts at all.

Gary Jensen, Pastor © July 23, 2020
Holy Trinity Lutheran Church (NALC), Berlin, PA, USA

⁹ Dr. John C. Lennox. <https://evolutionnews.org/2020/07/why-science-and-atheism-dont-mix/>