

# What Atheism Cannot Account For

"How long will you go limping between two different opinions?" (1 Kings 18:21a)

When scientists investigate complex natural phenomena,<sup>1</sup> they are not content to merely naysay speculations that *others* propose. Rather, they **seek a superior accounting** of the same data. Only by *reconciling* that *evidence* into the **most plausible theory** is the goal of science *fulfilled*.<sup>2</sup> Since many *skeptics* snub the Bible because, they allege, its' readers snub *science*,<sup>3</sup> it follows that skeptics would try to show them up by **fortifying their own view with scientific** facts. Further, *reason* ought to impel them to **highlight** the **specific** evidence that they *believe*<sup>4</sup> **better accounts** for existence than does the God of Genesis 1:1. Which view then; theism<sup>5</sup> or atheism,<sup>6</sup> **gives the best** accounting of the following?

1. **The universe had an absolute beginning from out of nothing at the Big Bang (BB).** A sizable list of scientific facts establish as unassailable<sup>7</sup> the certainty of this event. Yet it is impossible that the BB was itself the *cause*<sup>8</sup> of the universe for the reason that, **prior to the BB nothing physical existed** at all; **NOT** space **nor** time **nor** matter **nor** energy existed by which *scientific* processes could *conceivably* exist to create anything. The BB then, is **not** a cause, but an **effect of a cause** that is infinitely greater. While skeptics try to claim that quantum tunnelling and gravity *demonstrate* creation by nothing, they fail to grasp that these manifestations are **not nothing!**<sup>9</sup> They are as with all other physical realities that, likewise did not make themselves. Nothing *physical* existed at all prior to creation. What, then, can atheists conceivably posit that **better** accounts for the beginning of the universe than does the God of Genesis 1:1 who, alone, *transcends* it?<sup>10</sup>
2. **At the first moments of creation an extensive array of extremely fine-tuned initial forces and particles were present.** They included both **(1)** the **structure** of the strong and weak nuclear forces that manage protons inside atoms, and the strength of gravity and the electromagnetic force, and **(2)** the **circumstantial factors** following from that beginning, including both the total amount of physical mass that was created, as well as its' rate of expansion. The settings of each of these factors were precisely as they needed to be to yield the kind of a universe that has features capable of supporting life.<sup>11</sup> Since they were present at the earliest moments of the BB, they cannot have been an afterthought that followed an era of time since **no** constructive step *could* have occurred without **first** having *intact* atoms. Theists indicate that God the Creator has the capacity to do all this, while atheists, by contrast, fail to theorize a *positive* alternative.
3. **The presence of a genetic code inside DNA is found in every multi-cell life form.** *Genetic* research indicates that "*not even a simple parasite* [the most primitive of life forms] *can survive without at least 250 functioning gene products.*"<sup>12</sup> As Dr. Stephen Meyer, author of a landmark book on this matter,<sup>13</sup> wrote, "*The ability of the [living] cell depends on the precise sequential*

<sup>1</sup> A "phenomenon" is a fact or situation that is witnessed by one or more of our five senses, to exist or occur.

<sup>2</sup> Stephen Meyer. *Return of the God Hypothesis*. (Harper One, 2021), pp. 226f. This competition is called "inference to the best explanation."

<sup>3</sup> A view that is patently false. See William Dembski and Michael Ruse, eds. *Debating Design: From Darwin to DNA*. (Cambridge, 2004).

<sup>4</sup> Make no mistake, atheism is every bit as much of a belief system as is the biblical claim since neither can be proved.

<sup>5</sup> "Theism" is belief in the God of the Bible.

<sup>6</sup> Far from denying science, theism expressed in the Bible (Romans 1:18f), forbids suppressing scientific knowledge. Theism acknowledges that God most often, by far, works His purposes through *natural* (secondary) causes. So theism is in principle compatible with *natural* causation.

<sup>7</sup> For immediate access to the data see my pamphlet, "God's Prints are Everywhere" at my website: [www.christianityontheoffense.com](http://www.christianityontheoffense.com) My choice of the word "unassailable" stands because the body of *evidence* that the cosmos is expanding is of a kind that can't be explained away.

<sup>8</sup> While the Big Bang didn't have a naturalistic *cause*, the broad array of unassailable scientific *data* (Ibid) indicates it nevertheless *did* occur.

<sup>9</sup> While Stephen Hawking stated, "*Because there is a law like gravity, the universe can and will create itself from nothing.*" (Stephen Hawking and Leonard Mlodinow. *The Grand Design*. (Bantam, 2012), p. 180.), John Lennox refutes it. (Lennox. *God and Stephen Hawking*. (Lion, 2011.)).

<sup>10</sup> To *transcend* in this context means to stand entirely outside, apart, and conceptually different from the *physical* universe.

<sup>11</sup> Astronomer Hugh Ross. <https://reasons.org/explore/blogs/todays-new-reason-to-believe/more-evidence-for-a-beautiful-universe>

<sup>12</sup> Hugh Ross. *Creation as Science: A Testable Model Approach to End Creation/Evolution Wars*. NavPress, 2006), p. 127.

<sup>13</sup> Stephen Meyer. *Signature in the Cell: DNA and the Evidence for Intelligent Design*. (Harper One, 2009 ), p. 109

arrangement of the ["letters"] in DNA..." He further states, "The design patterns exemplified in the cell's **information processing system** also exhibit specifications. Why? Because we recognize [that those features] *match ones we know from...our own information technology.*" So, he concludes, "**Specified digital information** in the DNA molecule provides strong grounds for inferring that intelligence played a role in the origin of DNA."<sup>14</sup> Consequently, seekers of the source of any body of information always **limit their target to intelligent agents** (think "SETI)! So any desire to exclude the aspect of *personality* in this matter amounts to an **oxymoron** since *mechanistic* alternatives to a *personal agent* **cannot** plausibly be even *conceptualized*.

4. **Self-Consciousness.** The actuality firstly of our awareness of the external world and secondly, our comprehension of both our *inner-self* and our capacity to *reflect* on the complexity entailed in discerning the impressions confronting us through our senses, should instill within us a sense of wonder. Further, our potential of being both *inspired* and at times, *guided*, by our imaginations, and our capacity to reach solutions to complex problems, also raises the question of how *unguided* evolution could even conceivably be **more**<sup>15</sup> successful than *educated* people at *Apple* and *Microsoft*. For Christians, these reflections point to a *personal* God who *created us in His image* (Gen. 1:26). But concerning atheists, far from seeking to *account for* these experiences on mechanical terms, they outright **deny** the array of the volitional capacities that every human exercises continually (even if in denial of God). Can the reason for this absurdity be because the assertion that humans "*are just machines*"<sup>16</sup> amounts to literally an intellectual non-starter?
5. **Personal Free-Will.** Philosophical materialists hold that physical matter is all there is, which is why they hold that neither God nor even *soulish* beings exist. For that very reason they insist that the only *processes* which are real are interactions governed by intractable scientific laws.<sup>17</sup> Consequently, free will cannot even possibly exist. Indeed, our sensation of *choosing* what to do or even what to think, is a deception too since, as they say, we are just machines in which the events within our brains are merely electro-chemical interactions between the synapses of our neural system. Atheism too, embraces this view. Now I hope that it is becoming apparent that, despite being embraced by numerous academics, this position leads to logical incoherence. If it were actually true, then it applies not only to the professors who propagate it but also to their students sitting in their classrooms. Notice then its' absurdity: In the absence of free-will, how (by what tools) firstly are the professors to have formulated their ideas from their *mechanistic* brain, and also, on what rational grounds do they expect the "mechanistic machines"(students) to change their "minds" which are allegedly driven, entirely by *mindless* electric forces? This very notion indeed violates the very first rational principle; the law of *non-contradiction*.<sup>18</sup>

Finally, where does the scientific evidence actually lead? The tenet that matter is all that exists is nothing but *philosophical* prejudice since it cannot be proved either rationally or scientifically. Although claims that God *does* exist likewise lies outside of the scope of *scientific* inquiry, what science *can* do is clarify whether or not phenomenal reality is best explained by the existence of God or by mindless forces. But I repeat, the latter must come into existence in the first place!

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<sup>14</sup> Ibid. p. 347, 368.

<sup>15</sup> Such researchers and technicians create and manufacture only machines that cannot equal the multitask capacity of the average human.

<sup>16</sup> Daniel Dennett. youtube.com/watch?v=JP1nmExfgpg "There is no inner show and there is no single inner witness [in the brain]" (11:20).

<sup>17</sup> Reducible to mathematical formulas.

<sup>18</sup> <https://ndpr.nd.edu/reviews/the-law-of-non-contradiction-new-philosophical-essays/>