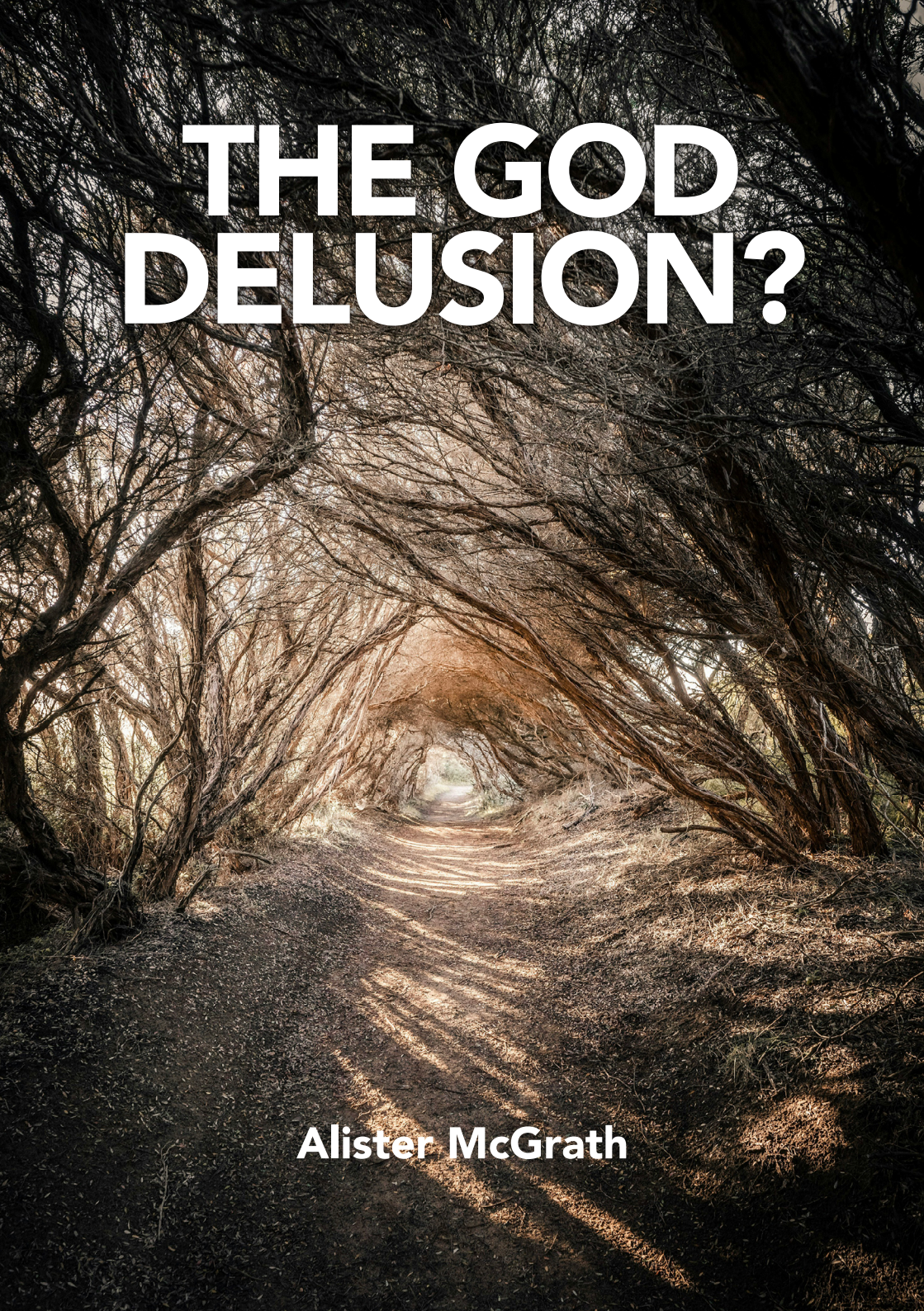
# THE GOD DELUSION?



Alister McGrath

# THE GOD DELUSION?

## The Rationality of Faith

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# Rational response or outmoded delusion?

Does belief in God makes sense? Or is it simply a delusion, a sad example of wish fulfilment on the part of lonely and longing human beings? As C.S. Lewis once commented, reflecting on his early beliefs as an atheist: 'Nearly all that I loved I believed to be imaginary; nearly all that I believed to be real I thought grim and meaningless.' [1]

This issue has gained importance recently on account of present debates in our culture. Although the New Atheism, which burst onto the scene in 2006, has now lost much of its novelty value, the questions it raises continue to be discussed. Is belief in God a rational response to reality, or an outmoded delusion, spread throughout the population by viruses of the mind, based on flimsy and naïve reasoning, and imposed by authoritarian institutions and individuals?

There is, of course, a more radical viewpoint: that all human attempts – whether theist or atheist – to construct meaning or establish values are equally delusional. This bleak view of reality is found at many points in the writings of Richard Dawkins. 'The universe we observe has precisely the properties we should expect if there is, at bottom, no design, no purpose, no evil and no good, nothing but blind pitiless indifference.' [2] We impose meaning and value on a meaningless universe. Meaning is invented, not discerned. This thought, as consistent as it is austere, is found by many to be unbearable.

In this booklet I shall consider the capacity of the Christian faith to make sense of things. In choosing to focus on the question of its rationality, I am not reducing Christianity to a rational explanation of things, nor implying that this is the

chief of its theological virtues. I am simply making the point that our present cultural context has been shaped by the rise of aggressive assertions of the fundamental irrationality of faith, and that it is therefore necessary to respond to these in a measured and informed way. So in what way does belief in God help us to make sense of things?

# Our longing to make sense of things

The shelves of our bookstores are cluttered with the latest novels by crime writers such as Ian Rankin and Patricia Cornwall, as well as the greats from the past. Arthur Conan Doyle, Agatha Christie, Earl Stanley Gardner and Dorothy L. Sayers built their reputations on being able to hold their readers' interest as countless mysterious murder cases were solved before their eyes. TV detectives have become an integral part of today's culture.

So why do we like crime fiction so much? Why is the detective novel such a significant literary genre? Dorothy L. Sayers herself offered an explanation for this, in a lecture which she proposed to broadcast to the French nation in early 1940. The idea behind this lecture was to bolster French morale in the early stages of the Second World War by emphasising the importance of France as a source of great literary detectives. [3] Sadly, Sayers told a friend that she had still not quite finished preparing her morale-boosting talk on 4 June 1940. The German High Command, doubtless realising the window of opportunity that this delay offered them, invaded France a week later. Sayers's talk celebrating the French literary detective was never broadcast. Might the course of French history have been different if it was?

I very much doubt it. Yet the lecture remains worth reading in its own right. One of the central themes of Sayers's lecture is that detective fiction appeals to our deep yearning to discover patterns, to uncover secrets, and to impose order on what seem to some to be an unrelated series of events, yet to the initiated are the vital clues that lead to the solution of the mystery.

We 'follow, step by step, Ariadne's thread, and finally arrive at the centre of the labyrinth.' [4] Sayers, one of Britain's most successful and talented detective novelists, argued that crime fiction was a powerful witness to our yearning to discover patterns, find meaning, and uncover hidden secrets.

For Sayers, the detective novel appeals to our implicit belief in the intrinsic rationality of the world around us, and our ability to discover its deeper patterns. Something important or interesting has taken place – such as the mysterious death of Sir Charles Baskerville. But what really happened? We were not there to observe this event. Yet by careful analysis of clues, we may identify the most likely explanation of what really happened.

This longing to make sense of things is not limited to crime fiction. The whole scientific enterprise can be seen as arising from a fundamental human longing to make sense of our observations of the world.

> The hallmark of natural philosophy is it stress on intelligibility: it takes natural phenomena and tries to account for them in ways that not only hold together logically, but also rest on ideas and assumptions that seem right, that makes sense. [5]

The question being asked, whether in science or religion or detective fiction, is this: What greater picture unifies our disparate observations? How can the threads of evidence and observation be woven into a tapestry of truth?

It is a vision that captivates the imaginations of many, and it still captivates mine. The ability of a theory – whether this is a detective's attempt to make sense of the evidence in a criminal case, or the more general human attempt to make sense of life – to account for what we observe is widely and rightly seen as an indicator (though not a proof) of its reliability.

# Christian faith and the illumination of reality

In one of the wonderful, unsubstantiated assertions that make up so much of his case against religion, Christopher Hitchens tells us that, since the invention of the telescope and microscope, religion 'no longer offers an explanation of anything important.' [6] It's a nice soundbite which, when placed alongside many other equally unsubstantiated soundbites, almost manages to create the semblance of an evidence-based argument. But is it anything more than that?

In his brilliantly argued recent critique of the New Atheism, Terry Eagleton ridicules those who treat religion as a purely explanatory entity:

> Christianity was never meant to be an explanation of anything in the first place. It's rather like saying that thanks to the electric toaster we can forget about Chekhov. Believing that religion is a botched attempt to explain the world is on the same intellectual level as seeing ballet as a botched attempt to run for a bus.' [7]

Eagleton is surely right here. There is far more to Christianity than an attempt to make sense of things. The New Testament is primarily concerned with the transformation of human existence through the life, death and resurrection of Jesus of Nazareth. The gospel is thus about salvation, the transformation of the human situation, not explanation. Yet while the emphasis of the Christian proclamation may not be on explaining the world, there is little doubt that it offers a distinctive intellectual matrix which, at least in principle, enables us to see things in

different ways, and thus leads us to act in ways consistent with this. Christianity involves believing that certain things are true, that they may be relied upon, and that they illuminate our perceptions, decisions, and actions.

The Christian understanding of faith is a complex notion, going far beyond offering 'explanations', or simply asserting or holding that certain things are true. Faith is relational and existential, engaging our emotions and imagination, going far beyond a capacity to offer intellectual accommodation to our observation of the world. [8] Yet there is no doubt that one of the core elements of faith is its capacity to position our observations of the world. It offers us a map, a way of seeing reality. Christian faith makes sense in itself, and makes sense of what we observe of everything else. While there is far more to Christianity than this, there is no doubting that its capacity to make sense of experience is one of its core themes.

We could thus think of the gospel as an illuminating radiance which lights up the landscape of reality, allowing us to see things as they really are. It is a point famously made by C.S. Lewis, who once wrote: 'I believe in Christianity as I believe that the Sun has risen – not only because I see it, but because by it, I see everything else.' [9] The French philosopher and social activist Simone Weil (1909-43), who discovered the Christian faith relatively late in her short life, makes this point well:

> If I light an electric torch at night out of doors I don't judge its power by looking at the bulb, but by seeing how many objects it lights up. The brightness of a source of light is appreciated by the illumination it projects upon non-luminous objects. The value of a religious or, more generally, a spiritual way of life is appreciated by the amount of illumination thrown upon the things of this world. [10]

The ability to illuminate is itself an important measure of the reliability of a theory. Yet our discussion of this point cannot take place in isolation from the greater picture, of which it is part – namely, how human beings come to believe and trust that certain things are correct.

Michael Polyani (1891-1976), the Hungarian chemist who later went on to explore the philosophical implications and consequences of the scientific method, neatly summarised the dynamics of the scientific endeavour. 'The pursuit of discovery,' he wrote, is 'guided by sensing the presence of a hidden reality toward which our clues are pointing.' [11] Polyani's observation is easily illustrated from the history of science. For example, Isaac Newton (1643-1727) came to realise that there was a common 'hidden reality' lying behind the motions of bodies on earth – such as the falling of an apple from a tree – and the movement of the planets around the sun. Newton called this invisible, intangible, hidden reality 'gravity', and was never quite sure that the notion actually made sense. His explanation of things seem to raise as many questions as it answered. [12]

As history records, a gallery of informed and influential scientific hecklers protested against this idea of an invisible, intangible, unobservable force, which seemed to die the death of a thousand qualifications. [13] But Newton was clear that it seemed to be the best way of explaining what he observed. In a famous image, he pointed to a greater reality lying beyond and behind what could be observed:

> I seem to have been only like a small boy playing on the sea-shore, diverting myself in now and then finding a smoother pebble or a prettier shell than the ordinary, whilst the great ocean of truth lay all undiscovered before me. [14]

Science, therefore, can reasonably – though not exhaustively – be thought of as a quest for, to use Polyani's phrase, 'a hidden

reality toward which our clues are pointing.' The use of the word 'clue' here is very significant, as it points immediately to a degree of uncertainty in our knowledge. We observe certain things; but what is the meaning? C.S. Lewis famously described things such as the human sense of right and wrong as 'clues to the meaning of the universe'. Such 'clues' are not hard proofs; they are soft pointers. Yet the accumulation of such clues often has an intellectual intensity that transcends the power of some so-called proofs. We may not be able to prove our core beliefs; we may, however, still believe them to be right, find them to be reliable, and act on their consequences.

# Charles Darwin on making sense of nature

Let me illustrate this point by turning to consider one of the greatest works of science, published 150 years ago: Charles Darwin's *The Origin of Species* (1859). This work is best understood as extended reflection on the implications of a series of clues Darwin found within nature – such as the persistence of rudimentary structures, the phenomenon of extinction, and the uneven geographical distribution of biological species. For Darwin, the 'hidden reality' (Polyani) towards which these clues pointed was natural selection – an invisible and intangible process whose existence was inferred rather than proven, but which nevertheless seemed to be the best explanation of what he observed. [15]

Darwin himself was quite clear that his critically important idea of natural selection 'cannot be directly proved', so that the idea must be judged 'according as it groups and explains phenomena'. [16] The clues pointed in the direction of the notion of natural selection, and in Darwin's view, his theory represented the best way of explaining them. He believed his theory to be true, but was wise enough to realise it could not be proved to be so. Some might say that Darwin was simply deluded, believing in something that could not be proven. But Darwin was confident that his explanation was the best available on account of its explanatory elegance and economy. As he wrote in the final edition of *The Origin of Species*, explanatory power is a clear indication – but not a decisive proof – of theoretical reliability.

> It can hardly be supposed that a false theory would explain, in so satisfactory manner as does the theory of natural

> selection, the several large classes of facts above specified. It has recently been objected that this is an unsafe method of arguing; but it is a method used in judging the common events of life, and has often been used by the greatest natural philosophers. [17]

Darwin thus draws a distinction between absolutely rigorous evidential standards of proof that a purist theoretician might demand, and what is actually realistic, given the nature of the evidence. For Darwin, his theory was justified by its empirical adequacy – its capacity to 'group and explain phenomena'. We see here the quest for a deeper meaning – for an underlying pattern, an integrated set of ideas that we believe reflects and corresponds to reality itself.

# Two aspects of rationality

Darwin's scientific method helps us to identify the core criteria for the 'rationality' of a scientific theory. We could summarise these in the form of two questions.

1. What is the evidence for believing that this theory is true? In other words, what observations or considerations lead us to propose a specific theory in the first place?

2. How good is the theory at accommodating what is actually observed in the world? How good is the 'empirical fit' between theory and observation? [18]

So what of the first criterion of rationality – namely, the arguments and evidence that might lead us to develop the idea that there is a God? The question of the evidence for Christian belief has been explored with philosophical rigour by writers such as Richard Swinburne and William Lane Craig, who offer deductive and inductive defences of the rationality of faith. Similar approaches have been developed by Charles Peirce, C.S. Lewis, and other writers. [20]

While these remain highly significant, I propose to deal here with the second approach, which I believe to have been neglected and overlooked by Christian apologists. [21] This approach concentrates on the 'empirical fit' between theory and observation. How good is the match between what we see and what we believe?

As the philosopher of science N.R. Hanson famously and rightly pointed out, we all wear theoretical spectacles when looking at the world. [22] The process of observation is not neutral, but is theory-laden. We all bring mental maps – what psychologists

often call 'schemas' – to our seeing of reality. [23] In part, the scientific enterprise concerns working out what specific set of theoretical spectacles bring the world into sharpest and clearest focus. And that sometimes means discarding one set of spectacles for another, when we realise that they work better. So which set of spectacles brings nature into sharpest focus? Which theory gives the best fit with observation?

To explore this further, we shall consider three areas of human experience, and consider how the Christian faith casts light on them. How effective is the Christian way of seeing things at making sense of what we observe? How good is the fit between theory and observation?

# Making sense of human history and culture

To begin with, let us consider how we might make sense of the progress of history, and the distinctive features of human culture. A number of controlling narratives has been proposed to make sense of these. One of them, favoured by the New Atheism, is that of the progressive improvement of the human condition through the erosion of religious superstition, and the emancipation of humanity from all taboos and arbitrary limits. It has become much more difficult to sustain this metanarrative in the west recently, as the manifest failings of western liberalism have become increasingly clear. Indeed, it is significant that this metanarrative is one of the chief targets of Eagleton's recent withering critique of the New Atheism.

Eagleton describes the 'dream of untrammelled human progress' as a 'bright-eyed superstition', [24] a fairy tale which lacks any rigorous evidential base. 'If ever there was a pious myth and a piece of credulous superstition, it is the liberal-rationalist belief that, a few hiccups apart, we are all steadily en route to a finer world.' It is interesting that Christopher Hitchens ends his polemic against religion with a plea for a return to the Enlightenment, especially the form it took in the 18th century. The myth of a lost golden age, it seems, persists in this most unlikely of quarters. Yet we are surely called to question fictions about both human individuals and society, even if these fictions are deeply embedded within the secular western mindset.

The New Atheism often accuses those who believe in God of holding onto 'unevidenced beliefs', in contrast to the rigorously proven factual statements of enlightened atheists. Yet what of its own belief in human progress? Eagleton dismisses this

myth as a demonstrably false pastiche, a luminous example of 'blind faith'. [25] What rational soul would sign up to such a secular myth, which is obliged to treat such human-created catastrophes as Hiroshima, Auschwitz, and apartheid as 'a few local hiccups' which in no way discredit or disrupt the steady upward progress of history? The difference between Christianity and the New Atheism seems to lie in their choice of so-called 'unevidenced beliefs' and 'controlling myths'. Neither can be proved; this, however, does not prevent us from making an adjudication as to which appears to be the more reliable and compelling.

So what of a Christian reading of culture and history? It lies beyond the scope of this booklet to develop even the outline of a Christian philosophy of history; [26] what I can do, however, is to note, however briefly, some themes of such a way of looking at history and culture, and explore how they map onto what we actually observe. Two controlling themes here are the ideas of humanity as, in the first place, created in the 'image of God', and in the second, sinful. While theologians and religious communities differ in the relative emphasis placed upon these two elements of a Christian understanding of human nature, [27] they are nevertheless twin poles around which any attempt to make sense of the enigmas and puzzles of how we behave, as individuals and in society, are orbiting.

We find ourselves excited and inspired by the vision of God, which draws us upwards; we find ourselves pulled down by the frailty and fallenness of human nature. It is a familiar dilemma, famously articulated by Paul: 'I do not do the good I want, but the evil I do not want is what I do' (Romans 7:19). From a Christian perspective, it is clear that we must recognise at one and the same time a greater destiny or capacity in humanity than most political systems or philosophies allow, and a corresponding capacity to fail to achieve such aspirations.

This way of thinking allows us to frame the complex picture we see of human culture and history, characterised by aspirations to greatness and goodness on the one hand, and oppression and violence on the other. Many have commented on the profound ambiguity of history, and the havoc which it wreaks for naïve theories of the goodness of humanity. Terry Eagleton is one of a series of commentators to point out the darker side of contemporary human culture ('corporate greed, the police state, a politically compromised science, and a permanent war economy') and history ('the misery wreaked by racism and sexism, the sordid history of colonialism and imperialism, the generation of poverty and famine').

As a species, humanity may indeed have the capacity for good; this seems matched, however, by a capacity for evil. A recognition of this profound ambiguity is essential if we are to avoid political and social utopianism, based on naïve, ideologically driven, non-empirical value-judgments about human nature. As J.R.R. Tolkien wrote so presciently in 1931, on the eve of the rise of Nazism, a naïve view of humanity leads to political utopianism, in which 'progress' potentially leads to catastrophe:

> I will not walk with your progressive apes,
> Erect and sapient. Before them gapes
> the dark abyss to which their progress tends. [28]

There is something to be said for Christianity's realistic attempt to make sense of humanity's capacity for good and for evil.

# Making sense of human experience

Secondly, let us consider something of the dynamics of inner human subjectivity – the feelings and emotions which lie at the heart of so many of our concerns, and which so excited the Romantic poets and writers. What has the Christian faith to say about these? How can we view our inner experience through its theoretical lens? The Christian tradition has explored this question from its outset. In his Confessions, Augustine of Hippo relates how his reading of 'the Platonists' led him to explore his own inwardness, and there encountered 'an immutable light, higher than my own mind'. [29] In this section, I shall consider one element of human experience, known to many, which seems ideal for exploration – a sense that on self-reflection, most people would acknowledge that the world does not provide what we aspire to most acutely. What does this sense of frustration disclose?

C.S. Lewis offers a Christian approach which has been widely discussed. [30] Lewis acknowledges the importance of frustrated aspirations for many: 'There was something we grasped at, in that first moment of longing, which just fades away in the reality.' So how is this to be interpreted? Louis notes two possibilities that he regards as flawed: to assume that this frustration arises from looking in the wrong places, or to conclude that further searching will only result in repeated disappointment, so that any attempt to find something better than the world can offer is a mistake. There is, Lewis argues, a third approach – to recognise that these earthly longings are 'only a kind of copy, or echo, or mirage' of our true homeland.

Lewis then develops what some might call an 'argument from desire', [31] which could be formalised as follows:

1. Every natural desire has a corresponding object, and is satisfied only when this is attained or experienced.

2. There is a natural desire for transcendent fulfilment, which cannot be attained or experienced by or through anything in the present world.

3. This natural desire for transcendent fulfilment can therefore only be fulfilled beyond the present world, in a world towards which the present order of things points.

Now this is not really an argument for the existence of God, in the strict sense of the term. For a start, we would need to expand Lewis's point to include the Christian declaration that God either is, or is an essential condition for, the satisfaction of the natural human desire for transcendent fulfilment. Yet even then, this is not an argument, understood as a deduction of God's existence.

Yet Lewis saw this line of thought as demonstrating the correlation of faith with experience, exploring the empirical adequacy of the Christian way of seeing reality with what we experience within ourselves. It is not deductive, but – to use Peirce's phrase – abductive. Lewis clearly believes that the Christian faith casts light upon the realities of our subjective experience. Augustine of Hippo wove the central themes of the Christian doctrines of creation and redemption into a prayer: 'You have made us for yourself, and our hearts are restless until they find the rest in you.' [32] Lewis reaffirms this notion, and sought to ground it in the world of human experience, which he believed that it illuminated.

# Making sense of the natural sciences

Finally, we turn to consider how the natural sciences fit within the geography of faith. My own time as a scientist impressed upon me the privilege of being able to investigate a universe that is both rationally transparent and rationally beautiful, capable of being represented in elegant mathematical forms. One of the most significant parallels between the natural sciences and Christian theology is a fundamental conviction that the world is characterised by regularity and intelligibility. As one modern cosmologist has noted, 'the God of the physicists is cosmic order'. [33] There is something special about the world – and the nature of the human mind – which allows patterns within nature to be discerned and represented.

This perception of ordering and intelligibility is of immense significance, both at the scientific and religious levels. As Paul Davis points out, 'in Renaissance Europe, the justification for what we today call the scientific approach to inquiry was the belief in a rational God whose created order could be discerned from a careful study of nature.' [34] Yet how are we to account for the regularity of nature? And for the human ability to represent it so well? Where do our notions of explanation, regularity and intelligibility come from? Why is nature actually intelligible to us? The human capacity for understanding our world seems to be far in excess of anything that could reasonably be considered to be simply an evolutionary necessity, or a fortuitous by-product of the evolutionary process.

The British theoretical physicist and theologian John Polkinghorne is an example of a writer who sees this as pointing to a Christian schema. There is, he argues, a 'congruence

between our minds and the universe, between the rationality experienced within and the rationality observed without.' [35] A naturalistic metaphysics is unable to cast light on the deep intelligibility of the universe, in effect being forced to treated as a fortunate accident. However, a theistic metaphysics argues that there is a common origin to both the rationality that we find within our minds and a rational structure of the physical world that we observe in the rationality of God. In other words, Christianity offers a framework which makes sense of what is otherwise a happy coincidence.

Others have pointed to the growing interest in anthropic phenomena, and suggested that these are also consonant with a Christian way of thinking. [36] The heavily freighted vocabulary of 'fine-tuning' is widely used to express the idea that the universe appears to have possessed certain qualities from the moment of its inception which were favourable to the production of intelligent life on Earth at this point in cosmic history, capable of reflecting on the implications of its existence. [37] Nature's fundamental constants turn out to have been 'fine-tuned' to reassuringly life-friendly values. The existence of carbon-based life on Earth depends upon a delicate balance of physical and cosmological forces and parameters, which are such that were any one of these quantities to be slightly altered, this balance would have been destroyed and life would not have come into existence.

Sir Martin Rees, Britain's Astronomer Royal and President of the Royal Society, has argued that the emergence of human life in the aftermath of the Big Bang is governed by a mere six numbers, each of which is so precisely determined that a minuscule variation in any one would have made both our universe and human life, as we now know them, impossible. [38]

As I point out in my 2009 Gifford Lectures, these themes resonate strongly with a Christian vision of reality. [39] They prove nothing, and other explanations are possible. But the

Christian mental map certainly makes sense of this aspect of the natural world, as it does of so much of the scientific enterprise. A Christian reading of the world offers a significant degree of empirical fit with what may be observed, despite the fact that this reading of things rests primarily, not on the reading of nature itself, but upon reflection on divine revelation. An appeal is thus made to the notion that the explanatory power of an explanation is itself seen as evidence of its correctness, an assumption that is found in most forms of 'inference to the best explanation' now prevalent in the philosophy of science. [40]

Despite the aggressive protests of dogmatic atheists such as Richard Dawkins, there is clearly a growing willingness on the part of empirical, non-dogmatic scientists to consider the metaphysical and religious implications of the scientific enterprise, which has created new and exciting conceptual possibilities. This is matched by an increasing awareness within the scientific community that, to quote the distinguished biologist Francisco J. Ayala, the 'scientific view of the world is hopelessly incomplete and that there are matters of value, meaning, and purpose that are outside science's scope.' [41] Both Christian theology and the natural sciences have exaggerated their capacities in the past, doubtless with the best of intentions. The time is now surely right for both disciplines to acknowledge their limitations, and open the way to new possibilities of collaboration, dialogue and sheer intellectual delight.

# Conclusion

In this booklet, I have been exploring the rationality of the Christian faith by asking how well its core ideas map onto the world of human experience. Christianity offers a 'big picture' account of reality, which allows the underlying unity of the world to be appreciated – what William James called a 'faith in the existence of an unseen order of some kind in which the riddles of the natural order may be found and explained.' [42]

Recent works in the philosophy of science have emphasised the importance of unification in scientific explanation – in other words, showing that phenomena which were once thought to be unconnected can be seen as aspects of a greater whole, which gives them their underlying unity. Once we discover the underlying unity of nature, we are better able to appreciate its individual aspects, and how they fit into a greater scheme of things. My argument has been that the Christian faith gives us a Kantian net which captures the essence of human experience, a map which positions our observations and locates them within a great scheme of things.

The British philosopher and novelist Iris Murdoch (1919-99) once spoke of 'the calming, whole-making tendencies of human thought', which was able to engage the complexities of experience and observation, while at the same time being able to transcend these through generating a comprehensive version of the world as a whole. [44] The Christian faith is a way of thinking which relates easily and naturally to a way of living, hoping and acting. It is a worldview that is grounded in reason but not limited by reason; a grand narrative, which can help us understand and navigate the road of life set out in our own narrative. Christian theology is our map, and God himself our

compass, as we journey through the world. As St Paul reminded us, we walk by faith, not by sight (2 Corinthians 5:7).

Yet I hope that this short booklet will open up discussion on how the Christian faith illuminates the world, and brings it into sharper focus. The Christian faith has the capacity to forge experiential and imaginative links between the most universal and absolute of truths and the everyday practices and concerns of ordinary men and women.

One of those concerns is to feel that we can make sense of our world and our lives. I hope that these brief reflections on the rationality of the Christian faith help demonstrate not only the reasonableness of that faith, but also its capacity to guide us as we journey through life, trying to discern the bigger picture that lies behind it – of which we are part. I believe that this faith enables us to journey in hope; I know it enables us to journey with a deeper grasp of the realities of life.

# Notes

1. CS Lewis, *Surprised by Joy* (London: Collins, 1989), 138.

2. Richard Dawkins, *River Out of Eden: A Darwinian View of Life* (London: Phoenix, 1995), 133.

3. Dorothy L. Sayers, *Les origines du roman policier* (Hurstpierpoint: Dorothy L. Sayers Society, 2003). See further Catherine Kenny, *The Remarkable Case of Dorothy L. Sayers* (Ohio: Kent State University Press, 1990), 1-119.

4. Sayers, *Les origines du roman policier*, 14.

5. Peter R. Dear, *The Intelligibility of Nature: How Science Makes Sense of the World* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2008), 173.

6. Christopher Hitchens, *God is Not Great: How Religion Poisons Everything* (New York: Twelve, 2007), 282.

7. Terry Eagleton, *Reason, Faith, and Revolution: Reflections on the God Debate* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2009), 7.

8. John Henry Newman's distinction between 'notional apprehension' and 'real apprehension' is useful here: see John R. Connolly, *John Henry Newman: A View of Catholic Faith for the New Millennium* (Lanham, MD: Rowan & Littlefield, 2005), 57-63; R. Michael Olsen, 'Real Apprehension in Newman's An Essay in Aid of a Grammar of Assent', *International Philosophical Quarterly* 45 (2005), 499-516.

9. C.S. Lewis, 'Is Theology Poetry?' In *C.S. Lewis: Essay Collection* (London: Collins, 2000), 1-21; quote at 21.

10. Simone Weil, *First and Last Notebooks* (London: Oxford University Press, 1970), 147.

11. Michael Polyani, *The Tacit Dimension* (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1967), 24.

12. Andrew Janiak, 'Newton and the Reality of Force', *Journal of the History of Philosophy* 45 (2007), 127-47.

13. For what is still the best account, see Mary B. Hesse, *Forces and Fields: The Concept of Action at a Distance in the History of Physics* (London: Nelson, 1961).

14. David Brewster, *Life of Sir Isaac Newton*, new edition, revised W.T. Lynn (London: Tegg, 1875), 303.

15. For the development of this notion in Darwin's thought, see Robert M. Young, 'Darwin's Metaphor and the Philosophy of Science', *Science as Culture* 16 (1993), 375-403.

16. F. Darwin (ed.), *The Life and Letters of Charles Darwin* (London: John Murray, 1887), vol. 2, 155.

17. Charles Darwin, *The Origin of Species*, 6th edition (London: John Murray, 1872), 444. This issue is explored in considerable depth in 'Religious and Scientific Faith: the case of Charles Darwin's Origin of Species', in Alister E. McGrath, *The Passionate Intellect: Christian Faith and the Discipleship of the Mind* (Downer's Grove, IL: IVP Books, 2010).

18. This second aspect includes the unificationist approaches to scientific explanation that have been developed recently: see, for example, Thomas Bartleborth, 'Explanatory Unification', *Synthese* 130 (2002), 91-108; Rebecca Schweder, 'A Defense of a Unificationist Theory of Explanation', *Foundations of Science* 10 (2005), 421-35.

19. See Richard Swinburne, *The Existence of God*, 2nd edition (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2004); William Lane Craig, 'In Defense of Theistic Arguments', in Robert B. Stewart (ed.) *The Future of Atheism* (London: SPCK, 2008), 67-96.

20. See, for example, Heather L. Nadelman, 'Baconian Science in Post-Bellum America: Charles Peirce's "Neglected Arguments for the Reality of God",' *Journal of the History of Ideas* 54 (1993), 79-96; Victor Reppert, *C.S. Lewis's Dangerous Idea: A Philosophical Defense of Lewis's Argument from Reason* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2003).

21. It is however used to good effect in the writings of John Polkinghorne: See John C. Polkinghorne, 'Physics and Metaphysics in a Trinitarian Perspective', *Theology and Science* 1 (2003), 33-49.

22. See especially N.R. Hanson, *Patterns of Discovery: An Inquiry into the Conceptual Foundations of Science* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1961). For further discussion, see Sami Paavola, 'Hansonian and Harmanian Abduction as Models of Discovery', *International Studies in the Philosophy of Science* 20 (2006), 93-108.

23. For an analysis, see Alister E. McGrath, *The Open Secret: A New Vision for Natural Theology* (Oxford: Blackwell, 2008), 80-110.

24. Eagleton, *Reason, Faith, and Revolution*, 28.

25. Eagleton, *Reason, Faith, and Revolution*, 87-89.

26. As found, for example, in the approaches of Jacques Maritain (1882-1973) and Nicholas Berdyaev (1874-1948). See, for example, Jude P. Dougherty, *Jacques Maritain: An Intellectual Profile* (Washington DC: Catholic University of American Press, 2003); Nicholas Beryaev, *The Philosophy of History* (Piscataway, NJ: Transaction Publishers, 2005).

27. See especially the Second Vatican Council's Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World, *Gaudium et Spes*. Representative alternative perspectives include Reinhold Niebuhr, *The Nature and Destiny of Man: A Christian Interpretation* (London: Nisbet, 1941); Emil Brunner, *Man in Revolt: A Christian Anthropology* (London: Lutterworth Press, 1947); Colin Gunton, 'Trinity, Ontology and Anthropology: Towards a Renewal of the Doctrine of Imago Dei', in Christopher Schwöbel and Colin Gunton (eds.), *Persons Divine and Human: King's College Essays in Theological Anthropology* (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1991), 47-64.

28. J.R.R. Tolkien, 'Mythopoeia' in J.R.R. Tolkien, *Tree and Leaf* (London: HarperCollins, 1992), 85-90; quote on 89.

29. Augustine of Hippo, *Confessions*, VII.x.16.

30. See C.S. Lewis, *Mere Christianity* (London: Collins, 1952), 134-38. See also a similar argument in C.S. Lewis, 'The Weight of Glory', in *Screwtape Proposes a Toast* (London: Collins, 1965), 94-110.

31. For Lewis's approach, see Peter Kreeft, 'C.S. Lewis's Argument from Desire', in Michael H. MacDonald and Andrew A Tadie (eds.), *G.K. Chesterton and C.S. Lewis: The Riddle of Joy* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1989), 249-72. More generally, see John Haldane, 'Philosophy, the Restless Heart, and the Meaning of Theism', *Ratio* 19 (2006), 421-40.

32. Augustine of Hippo, *Confessions*, I,i,1.

33. Heinz R. Pagels, *The Cosmic Code: Quantum Physics and the Language of Nature* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1984), 83.

34. Paul Davies, *The Mind of God: Science and the Search for Ultimate Meaning* (London: Penguin, 1992), 77.

35. John C. Polkinghorne, *Science and Creation: The Search for Understanding* (London: SPCK, 1988), 20-21. More recently, see John C. Polkinghorne, 'Physics and Metaphysics in a Trinitarian Perspective', in *Theology and Science* 1, (2003), 33-49.

36. Robin Collins, 'A Scientific Argument for the Existence of God: The Fine-Tuning Design Argument', in Michael J. Murray (ed.), *Reason for the Hope Within* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1999), 47-75. Interest in this point was catalysed significantly by John Barrow and Frank J. Tipler, *The Anthropic Cosmological Principle* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1986).

37. See, for example, Rodney D. Holder, *God, the Multiverse, and Everything: Modern Cosmology and the Argument from Design* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2004).

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