

**DELUSIONS**  
**Pragmatic Realism**

by  
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**By the same author**

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DICTIONARY OF BIBLICAL SYMBOLISM  
VISULIZATION—CREATING YOUR OWN UNIVERSE

## **Contents**

### **FOREWORD**

### **INTRODUCTION**

#### **PART ONE — PAST**

[Chapter 1](#). Fundamentalism in Religion and Science.

[Chapter 2](#). Where We Were

[Chapter 3](#). What We Were

[Chapter 4](#). The God Diffusion

[Chapter 5](#). The Beginning and the End.

[Chapter 6](#). Why We Where: Phase One

[Chapter 7](#). Atheist's Delusion.

#### **PART TWO — PRESENT**

[Chapter 8](#). Fundamentalism in Religion and Science

[Chapter 9](#). Where We Are

[Chapter 10](#). What We Are

[Chapter 11](#). The God Diffusion

[Chapter 12](#). The End of the Beginning

[Chapter 13](#). Why We Are: Phase Two

[Chapter 14](#). Atheist's Delusion

#### **PART THREE — FUTURE**

[Chapter 15](#). Fundamentalism in Religion and Science

[Chapter 16](#). Where We Might Be

[Chapter 17](#). What We Might Be

[Chapter 18](#). The God Diffusion

[Chapter 19](#). The Beginning of the End

[Chapter 20](#). Why We Shall Be: Phase Three

[Chapter 21](#). Scientist's Delusion

### **POSTSCRIPTUM**

**APPENDIX I** — The Church

**APPENDIX II** — Science

**APPENDIX III** — Richard Dawkins

### **EPILOGUE**

### **BIBLIOGRAPHY**

## FOREWORD

**I am reminded of a story** about a seeker, a man from the West, coming upon two Buddhist monks. They were sitting in a contemplative silence, some distance apart. After waiting for a respectful while, in an attempt to understand the Infinite, the tourist asked the first monk,

“Is there a God?”

The monk opened his eyes, looked with patient tolerance at the traveler and replied, “Of course not.”

The seeker shook his head in deep disappointment. Yet, the scientific part of his brain smiled with satisfaction. On the other hand, having been trained in the scientific method he felt a deep void in his heart. His upbringing and training precluded the existence of the permanent; of something he could fall back on if all else failed, and in science things changed constantly—even the universe. But, he was a seeker; he refused to give up. After another while he approached the second monk and repeated the same question,

“Is there a God?”

The second monk opened his eyes, looked at the traveler with inherent compassion and replied, “Of course. I am.”

It sounded like a Zen Koan. Or, in Master Hyakujo’s words, “The enlightened man is *one* with causation.”

The seeker remembered: “The perceiver and the perceived are one.”

Contented, the seeker went on his way.

## INTRODUCTION

*In nature there are neither rewards nor punishments; there are consequences.*

Robert Green Ingersoll  
American social activist, orator and agnostic (1833—1899)

**As you must have gathered,** or suspected from the

dedication, this book has been inspired by Richard Dawkins's last book, *God Delusion*, or at least the last book of his I read. And this in spite of the fact that my hero seems quite unable to understand that in the USA, and probably in most other parts of the world, religions, for the most part, have nothing to do with the existence of god, only with political expediency. His determined, if justified, attacks on most religions, made me think that, after all, there is little difference between religion and science. I know he'd vehemently object to this sentiment, but so would all people who deeply believe in the righteousness of their cause. And don't be mistaken. With the author of *God Delusion*, the destruction of all things that most people hold holy is a cause. A *Cause Célèbre*.

Yet, one of many reasons why I admire Richard Dawkins is his inherent honesty. Having spent a good part of his book doing his damndest to destroy religions, and even faith as such, he offers us the following statement:

King James Bible of 1611—the Authorized Version—includes passages of outstanding literary merit in its own right... (examples follow). But the main reason the English Bible needs to be part of our education is that it is a major source book for literary culture. The same applies to the legends of the Greek and Roman gods...

Such sentiment is rare indeed, and very close to my heart. I would add to this selection *The Song Celestial*, the translation of *Ghagavad Gita* (from The Mahabharata) by Sir Edwin Arnold. His poetic translation from Sanskrit text is so graceful as to be practically unrecognizable from the *Bhagavad-Gita* offered us by His Divine Grace, A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Probhupada, with its ongoing learned fundamentalist purports. The *Song Celestial* is as poetic as are David's *Psalms* or, as Dawkins so aptly observed, "the *Song of Songs*, and the sublime *Ecclesiastes*." And let us not forget the euphoria Jalaludin Rumi shares with us, his inspiration coming directly from the Koran. Any man whose translation fails to capture the spirit or the beauty of the scriptures misses the opportunity to raise the consciousness of the reader.

Bravo, Dr. Dawkins! As Burns and Wordsworth and Salinger would say, you're a Gentleman and a Scholar.

The original title of my book, as you might have guessed by scanning through the table of content, was to have been “*Pragmatic Realism*”, but it sounded too much like a philosophical dissertation. Also, I don’t have any delusions about being a philosopher, fewer still about following any particular religion, or betting my life on the latest scientific discoveries. I guess, we are just all people who believe in different things.

Yet, having taken some time to study both parties in the science/religion argument, it seems to me that they both carry equal force, and most certainly are equally as stubborn, equally as set in their ways, and most certainly equally as convinced that they are right. Nevertheless, the argument can never be settled, for the simple reason that one party argues from the intellectual and the other from the emotional point of view. I let you decide which is which, although don’t be surprised if, at times, the demarcation line becomes blurry.

My learned ‘inspirer’ failed to mention what were the sources that, in turn, inspired both, the religions and the various sciences. Lao Tzu (the Old Master), Krishna, Buddha, Yeshûa, among others, men who did little more than try to alleviate the hardships of everyday life of their fellow men; who tried, through their own experience to show others how to be happy. And, by the way, not one of them ever claimed divinity. People who cannot live without an idol they can both, fear and adore, have imposed the title of god, or something akin to divinity, on them all. A strange predilection but, apparently extremely human, considering that those very masters did their best to dissuade their followers from doing just that. In a way, the great masters had all been Hedonists, determined to alleviate suffering from the human equation.

To alleviate suffering here and now.

It is indeed unfortunate that Mr. Dawkins spent so much time illustrating how people, masses of misguided people, managed to distort their teaching, rather than giving equal time to explaining the beauty of the original myths. I say myths, because it takes a great effort to try to uncover the truths, which the past masters attempted to impart to us.

In John 8:23, evidently growing desperate or at best frustrated, Yeshûa asks his disciples: “Why do ye not understand my speech?”

This sad, desperate cry is still ringing in my ears.

Unfortunately the followers of religions were just as deaf as the scientists of the day. And, it seems, both remain deaf to this day.

Rather than enter into a preaching contest, I'll attempt to show that we, being a very, very primitive species, are extremely likely to be equally as wrong, whichever course we choose to guide our lives. The religionists choose essentially the emotional path, the scientists the intellectual. Perhaps that is what Einstein meant when he said as late as 1941 at the Symposium on Science, Philosophy and Religion, that "*Science without religion is lame, religion without science is blind.*"

Atheists hate this quotation, assuming that because of it, Einstein was, or had been, misrepresented as a religious man. The problem they, the vast majority of the atheists, have is that of semantics. They have absolutely no idea what Einstein meant by the word religion, let alone by the concept of god. For the uninitiated, let me just say that the word 'religion' comes from Latin, meaning, 'to reconnect'. The question is, to what?

And there's the rub! The atheists don't know. Nor do most followers of various religions. Perhaps none of us know. Wasn't Einstein a genius? Alas, he's dead. He won't tell us. But for those who have no idea where to begin their search for the answer, try listening to Mozart's Requiem. It's a good start.

I'd suggest that we should not exclude an important part of the human nature while in the pursuit of knowledge. According to the old masters, we are fourfold-entities, integral in spiritual, mental, emotional and physical form. The first is responsible for ideas, the second for intellectual perambulations, the third for igniting those ideas with fire (to produce tangible results), and the final aspect that is little more than the consequence, or the result, which we may examine, carefully, to see how far we have strayed from the original idea.

We are life, and life is a learning process.

With regard to the intellect, I used the word perambulations with particular reference to science, in the original British meaning: to walk around (the parish, forest, or indeed, anywhere) in order to assert and record its boundaries. This is essentially what scientists do: they walk about, view, study as best they can, in order to record and

assert boundaries of the object or idea they are examining. Unfortunately this approach is always limiting—it is setting boundaries. The better they define (the more dogmatic they become), the more they limit. This method, by itself, also removes the first trait of our make up, the ‘spiritual’ aspect. By that I mean that a scientist, by limiting himself to careful observation, precludes new ideas from infiltrating his dedicated purpose.

In spite of theoretical physicists’ assurances that the act of observation changes the nature of that which is observed, the vast majority of scientists are satisfied with what’s was there, though already isn’t.

A sad ‘observation’ indeed.

Here again I chose to place inverted commas in the word ‘spiritual’, for the simple reason that I never met two people who agreed on the meaning of ‘spirit’. The concept, however, is universal. Here’s an excerpt from an essay I wrote in 1997 entitled *Spirit*. It is part of my *Beyond Religion II* collection. The essay is based, in part, on a book by Lyall Watson, the *Lightning Bird*.

People living in northwestern Transvaal call themselves Ba Sotho. All things that are special to Ba Sotho have *moya*. The Polynesians call it *mana*. Both words have also been translated as wind, air, breath, spirit, soul and even life. In the Christian tradition, the Greek word *pneuma* has been translated as spirit, as had the Hebrew *ruach*, which also means wind and air. The Hebrews also have a word *neshamah*, which they translated variously as spirit or breath. Paul Twitchell, who wrote extensively on ancient religions, equates the words spirit and life as being synonymous, while defining the essence of soul as spirit. Thus between the Judeo-Christian tradition and some later writing attributing its knowledge to pre-Judaic scriptures, the Ba Sotho have covered all possible meanings.

But only the Ba Sotho people give us an insight into the nature of spirit itself. According to Lyall Watson, Ba Sotho regard *moya* as “the essence of nature itself.” Dr. Watson compares their vision of *moya* to electricity, as being powerful but as having no will or purpose of its own. They, the Ba Sotho, lay no claim as to its origin and suggest that, “it may simply exist.” A few weeks ago a friend of mine came to see me. His eyes were shining with a new understanding.

“There is no difference between spirit and matter,” he said. He reached this conclusion in 86th year of his life. Were he and the Ba Sotho talking about the same thing?

In my reality, the words spirit, life, and consciousness, are synonymous. There is no life without consciousness; in both flora and fauna life manifests in different degrees, but life and consciousness remain synonymous. No ideas can touch our awareness when we are dead (not to be confused with ‘spiritually’ dead, which applies to people who knowingly shut off this gate of infinite knowledge.) As for physical ‘death’, I never met a person who was dead and conscious. I challenge any and all scientists to prove me otherwise. Of course, having walked about the parish, I do not equate physical cessation of biological functions with death. As I mentioned, our physical body is the result, not the cause of our being. In later chapters, we shall discuss what our body really is.

Don’t hold your breath... it’s not pretty.

My only way out was to try and leave out both: religions and science from this discussion. But as I could not make my points yet leave out both, emotions and intellect, completely from the equation (there would be no discernible result), I decided to resort to *Pragmatic Realism*. I’m sure that you’ll find pages in this book where I appear to repeat the same maxims more than once. In my defense I can only plead that both scientists and religionists do so at least as often as I do, and, once again, I am unable to dismiss two aspects of my nature to sate your need for perfection. Ideas may be perfect, the resolutions seldom are. Contact me in a few million years. I’m sure I’ll do better.

**To make sure that we are** on the same page, let us agree what we mean by Pragmatic Realism. There is absolutely no point in having a philosophy that does not support our view of reality. Thus if you wish to count yourself among people guided by a pragmatic approach, you can include in your philosophy only those assumptions that work satisfactorily, that are practical in the interpretation of reality as we understand it.

Also, the ideas must be testable.

There go the myths! Unless, of course, we can prove



them, or at least some of them, as true. And the strangest thing of all is that if one eliminates the malignant growth, which religions have imposed on the original myths, more of them seem a great deal closer to the truth than originally (i.e. since the onset of the age of enlightenment began) imagined. In fact, science is only now beginning to find facts, which many a myth proposed millennia ago. One can but wonder what tomorrow might bring.

Yet here we encounter problems with our nature.

The problem with people is that, unbeknownst to them, they are continuously creating realities. The universe is an on-going process. Stars are born, and stars die. In this whirlwind of life, the religionists long to satisfy their emotional needs for stability, the scientists aim to satisfy their intellectual hunger for intellectual base, e.g.: the Higgs boson, sometimes referred to (yes, by scientists) as “the God particle”. The priests, monks, preachers and their followers are in need of a god who will reward them for their good deeds, punish their enemies and, ultimately, grant them a way out—an eternal existence in heaven. Eternal boredom?

Scientists, on the other hand, are in need of a reality that makes, to them, some sort of logical sense. Einstein needed order and harmony and expected to find it in his equations. Now, even the velocity of light is being questioned. Both, religionists and scientists base their reality on transient phenomena. Their realities have both, a beginning and an end.

Pragmatic Realism needs neither. A pragmatic realist deals with events such as they are—not such as they want them to be. “I know... that I know nothing,” said a wise man 2500 years ago. At long last, our ever-erring theoretical physicists have reached the state of embracing their ignorance—the premise that there are possibilities, at best probabilities, but no dogmas. If it weren’t so, then the rest of eternity would be sheer hell for them.

Let us return to the roots of modern pragmatism.

The concept was (re)introduced in late nineteenth century by an American philosopher, logician, and mathematician, Charles Sander Peirce (1839—1914) about whom Bertram Russell, himself a philosophical heavyweight, wrote in 1959: “Beyond doubt (...) he was (...) certainly the greatest American thinker ever.”

He, Peirce, postulated a maxim that an ideology or theory can only be true if—and only if—it works satisfactorily, and that the meaning of a proposition is to be found in the practical consequences of accepting it, and that impractical ideas are to be rejected. Here is the original 1878 statement:

“It appears, then, that the rule of attaining the third grade of clearness of apprehension is as follows: Consider what effects, that might conceivably have practical bearings, we conceive the object of our conception to have. Then, our conception of these effects is the whole of our conception of the object.”

Perhaps it should be noted that concepts of pragmatism are already present in the views of some ancient philosophers, including Xenophanes, Socrates, and Plato.

Since this appears to be the place to reestablish our semantics, I wish to clarify what I mean by philosophy. Not the dictionary definition, but its origins. *Philos* (according to Wikipedia) “denoted a general type of love, used for love between family, between friends, a desire or enjoyment of an activity, as well as between lovers”. *Sophia*, (or *Sofya*) quite simply meaning wisdom. And wisdom, to use the suggestion first offered by Emmet Fox, is a perfect blend of love and knowledge. The reconstruction of the word I leave to you.

## **PART ONE — THE PAST**

*“...all matter originates and exists only by virtue of a force which brings the particles of an atom to vibration which holds the atom together. We must assume behind this force is the existence of a conscious and intelligent mind. This mind is the matrix of all matter.”*

Max Planck 1858—1947  
Nobel Prize in Physics in 1918

### **Chapter 1**

#### **Fundamentalism in Religion and Science**

*A fanatic is a man who consciously over compensates a secret*

*doubt.*

Aldous Leonard Huxley, British author (1894—1963)

**Trying to argue for or against** the existence of God leads to an unavoidable stalemate. The opposing parties have not agreed on the semantics, which would, or could, define the existence of the Infinite Source, yet both insist, as Albert Einstein had done, that Infinity exists. The physicist Max Plank (above) goes still further. He postulates, or at the very least suggests, the pre-existence of a mind which is a “matrix of all matter”. As for infinity, Einstein, for his part, wasn’t sure about the universe, but quite confident about his other candidate. No. The other candidate he was referring to was not the Infinite Source—it was human stupidity.

Although infinity cannot really be defined, we know the infinite by different names. As pointed out by Baruch Spinoza: “To define God is to deny God.” Thus, the Infinite, or whatever moniker you wish to impose on God, cannot be defined without imposing limits on it. The word ‘define’ comes to us directly from Latin, *definire* meaning (inter alia) to limit, to explain, to bound as in set boundaries for, or to restrict. Not the sort of thing one would want to do with anything we like to think of as Infinite, particularly if we were to spell it with capital ‘I’.

Furthermore, probability (of being right) dictated by the quantum theory should apply in equal measure to science and to myths. Though admittedly religions no longer qualify to be included in the divergent views of reality, one could say that Yeshûa was the Dawkins of his day, doing his best to free people from the mental and emotional oppression of the priests.

Perhaps, unfortunately, this is where the similarity ends. While Yeshûa confined himself to instilling faith in one’s own potential, Dawkins tends to put the shackles of the ever-erring science on human consciousness. Why ever-erring? Because, we appear to change our minds every five minutes. Intellectually, we are, I am sorry to say, primitives.

Hence, I would suggest, we should preoccupy ourselves with little more than with Pragmatic Realism, as ancient myths appear to have done. As for (omnipresent?) intelligence, the Max Plank’s mind, or an “infinite

source"... they are another matter. We shall touch upon them throughout this book. The mind of an individual is, as we have seen in my little FOREWORD, quite another matter.

The only higher power Yeshûa, or Jesus as he was later known, recognized lay within himself. Charles Darwin (as does Dawkins with religious fervour) seems to externalize it by assigning it to the Universal Laws. Yeshûa, on the other hand, stated, quite clearly, that he and his 'father' (as he seemed to have referred to 'whatever was the absolute source of his power') are one.

Subjective experience is no less real and pragmatic than the so-called 'scientific' or objective experience that can be shared with, or by, others. All intangible experiences such as love, hate, a whole gamut of emotions, love or dislike of music, art... beauty in the eyes of the beholder... all that cannot be measured by human senses or by modern instrumentation, would have to be dismissed by an analytical/scientific mind. Yet we all must pass judgment on reality in which we find our being, whether we like it or not.

At least, in spite of popular belief, the followers of biblical teaching can be sure of one thing, though only if they actually *read* the Bible:

1. God does *not* pass judgment, ("...for the father (god) judges no man." John 5:22). Tell that to the millions of preachers and/or critics, who'd never read the Bible, or managed to diligently omit the items they found uncomfortable.
2. God *cannot* behold evil. ("You are of purer eyes than to behold evil, and cannot look on iniquity..." Habakkuk 1:13).

At least there is something that 'God' cannot do. Makes him almost... human, but contrary to us, the consequence of not being able to discern evil entails inability to pass judgment. On the other hand, the father "hath committed *all judgment* unto the *son*," (John 5:22). That's you and me. Yes, ladies are included. So far, so good. The Bible has set limits on the biblical Infinite but, so far, not on us.

"*Ye are gods...*" rings in my ears.

Anyone interested can find many confirmations of my selections throughout the Bible. Good luck.

Under the circumstances, at least for Jews and

Christians, any discussion on the reality of good and evil as envisioned by believers, be they scientists or not, is entirely in our own hands. Or heads. Or whatever we use to be dogmatic and/or intolerant. We seem to find both traits quite easy to espouse. Buddhists already know what they are doing. They are just waiting to be awakened, while practicing the Eightfold Path. And the Four Noble Truths, of course, although I happen to disagree with one of them. I don't believe that "Life means Suffering". My book, *Key to Immortality* suggests why suffering is not necessary. Sorry Gautama, but, after all, the *Gospel of Thomas* has been written some 600 years after you withdrew your consciousness from your physical body, and seekers of nirvana must have learned something new since.

A word about priesthood of yesteryear.

One cannot really blame the scientists for suffering from a good dose of fundamentalism. After all, for thousands of years, priesthood and scientists had been virtually synonymous. Only the priests had the means to study nature, not to mention the stars, and they alone declared their findings to people at large. Since our senses are extremely inefficient—we can see, for instance, but a minute, a really minuscule fragment of the wavelength of light surrounding us—the results of their scientific observations were not very reliable. It is to be hoped that scientists of today, having a more advanced technology and seemingly vast financial resources at their disposal, and being no longer constrained by dogmatic interferences from various churches and sacerdotal circles, will assure that the conclusions of their observations will be more trustworthy. Alas, not so. Many of the scientists continue to declare their finding dogmatically, continue to hate to be criticized, and then... change their mind.

Echoes of the past?

In early Judaism the priesthood was inherited through the families. While some Jews (e.g.: the Sadducees, who also fulfilled various political and religious roles including looking after the Temple, and the Karaites, meaning 'readers of the Hebrew scriptures'), claimed to have had their beliefs based on the written text, the Torah, most Jews appeared to have followed the Oral Law. The Pharisees (meaning 'set apart') took it upon themselves to transmit this Law to their remaining compatriots.

Yeshûa, as stated above, had little regard for the priesthood. He expressed his opinion about the priesthood quite clearly:

“But woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye shut up the kingdom of heaven against men: for ye neither go in yourselves, neither suffer ye them that are entering to go in.” (Matthew 23:13)

Nothing changed.

Of course, Yeshûa (*Jesus*) taught that heaven is a state of consciousness, thus within us, an idea not picked up by the Christian religions to this day, and dismissed outright by scientists (with the exception of a few psychiatrists) as superstition.

“Why would anybody want to be happy here and now?” “Why would anybody want to find infinite potential within themselves?” they seem to ask. Yes, *they*, both of them, the priesthood and the scientists.

Perhaps that was why he, Yeshûa, had a number of other equally unpleasant and certainly undiplomatic things to say about the scribes and Pharisees. As I am sure, he would today about their counterparts.

**Thus, the whole discussion** about a resident or *in absentia* divinity is abortive. Still, both Dawkins and his opponents made a lot of chutzpa (and hopefully money), in their attempts to destroy each other. And I should mention, that I share most of the apostate author of *God Delusion* views regarding a whole gamut of religions, not, however, regarding reality. Also, religion has little, if anything, to do with ‘god’. Look up the words of mystics on the subject and you’ll agree, also. Words such as “Don’t call me good, only my father is good and he’s in heaven. Or... “Don’t call me master,” or... “The son of man can do nothing by himself.” The scriptures demolish gods faster than I ever could. One day, we shall all agree. After all, are we not all latent Buddhas?

A word of caution. When referring to god as ‘good father’, we might bear in mind the words of Lao Tzu: “Tao is *impartial*—it always favours good men,” (my italics).

In a dualistic reality, i.e. one based on the opposites of good and evil, only the state of balance is ‘good’. There is a pragmatic saying that “God is what the opposites have in common”. This is a great unwavering guideline for

establishing the ethics of life. There is an old paradigm stating that there is no good without some evil, no evil without some good. If we ignore the 20-million deaths left in his wake, Hitler, from the point of view of eugenically inspired standards could claim to be 'good', or at least 'moral'. However, he was very far from the state of balance. Even as George W. Bush, evidently guided by the self-confessed and publicly announced new-born Christian status and with able, indeed eager, assistance of Toni Blair, is said (Opinion Research Business survey in Wikipedia) to have been at least in part responsible for the murder, or at least for the death, of approximately one million people. How is that for loving your enemy!

This is why I prefer to regard ethics as defining man's actions, while relegating morality to little more than keeping up with the Joneses and avoiding a public scandal.

Hence, Pragmatic Realism.

Without entering into the benefits or otherwise of various religions, a question arises how religious systems manage to survive longer than other systems designed to control man's minds. I am referring to social systems including all empires and political entities.

With regard to scientists, some evolutionary biologists have introduced *memes* as having properties necessary for evolution. (A little bit like the black matter in the universe, which is purported to help it collapse onto, or possibly into, itself). Essentially, a *meme* is an element of a culture or system which is, or can be, passed from one individual to another by non-genetic means, e.g. by imitation. It has been suggested that various religions, or cults, have survived, albeit for a very short time, due to memetic collaboration.

The proponents of this thesis may be right. I find it hard to imagine that genes (no matter how selfish) could, all by themselves, create monsters who would burn members of their own species on the stake.

Yet, as for longevity of some ecclesiastic organizations, I am inclined to disagree, especially as regarding religions that lasted longer than a century or two. In such cases, it is my contention that it is the threat of punishment and reward that keeps them going. Parents teach their children to be afraid at a very early age. In western religions, heaven and hell, the ultimate carrot and the ultimate stick, assure the religious system's survival.

Throughout history, although less successfully, the same method had been attempted by various political entities. Genghis Khan, Hitler, Stalin, and only to a slightly lesser degree George W. Bush and his oligarchy, have all scared their people into abject submission. It is by far the easiest way to retain control over peoples' minds and modes of behaviour.

As for Buddhism, I never regarded it as religion. It is more what the western religions purport to be—a way of life.

The carrot and the stick have proven the most pragmatic method, even though it is completely divorced from reality. It does prove, however, that we, *en masse*, still expect to be treated like little children.

Interesting?

## Chapter 2 **Where We Were**

*Do what you can, with what you have, where you are.*

Theodore Roosevelt, 26th U.S. President (1858—1919)

**Not so long ago the Earth was flat.** If you went sailing, and if you weren't careful, you might have slipped over the edge to your doom. Unless you were stopped by a 40-foot high wall of ice at the very edge of the earth/ocean, which would also smash your boat to pieces—a dubious choice of impending demise. The modern hypotheses of the Flat Earth Society created not so long ago by Samuel Rowbotham (1816–1884), is still doing quite well in the USA. Though originating in the UK, its 'modern' version, founded by another Englishman, Samuel Shenton in 1956, was later led by Charles K. Johnson, who made his home in Lancaster, California. The Society was inactive after the American's death in 2001, but was quickly resurrected by its new president, Daniel Shenton, in 2004.

The late president, Charles Johnson, thus expressed the aims of the Society:

“To carefully observe, think freely, rediscover forgotten fact and oppose theoretical dogmatic



assumptions. ...To replace the science religion...  
with SANITY.”

Surely, all noble sentiments. A little of what I am attempting to do, right now. We all try to do this, at least those of us who have not yet been dragged into the quagmire of fundamentalism of science or religion. As Einstein said, “Education is what remains after one has forgotten everything he learned in school.” He was referring to other peoples’ knowledge. Not knowledge coming from within. A number of poets, musicians, scientists, and mystics admitted to having woken up, after a good night’s sleep, with new, sometimes revolutionary, ideas. Subconscious at work? Perhaps. But, what of the unconscious?

There are other things that a well-trained scientific mind must dismiss as irrelevant, or at least *non sequitur*. There is a story about Einstein (who was said to have been a very stupid child) that he has only shed his presumed obtuseness after his mother bought him a violin. Even after leaving school, Einstein played Mozart or Bach to help him with his equations. Not a very scientific approach but, at least for me, Einstein was first a philosopher, and only then a scientist. In the old days, philosophers have had to be mathematicians. I suppose ‘physicist’ is the next best thing. By that I mean that his scientific theories were the result of his philosophy and logic, not the other way round. He is said to have even used the fiddle to improve on his equations. No mention of genes or memes.

So much for scientific method.

Of course, in spite of the Flat Earth Society, our scientists have made enormous strides since 2004. Most of them accept that the Earth is fairly round. I am told that since condemning Galileo Galilei (1564—1642), and burning Giordano Bruno (1548—1600) at the stake as heretic for sharing Copernican (Mikołaj Kopernik 1473—1543) views, even the Vatican accepted the notion.

For now. Until the next revelation?

We must never forget that the Vatican Observatory (Papal interest in astronomy dates back to 1578) is a scientific research institute of the Holy See subject to the Governorate of Vatican City State. Rather like Royal Astronomical Society (founded in 1820), or the American

Astronomical Society (est. in 1899), only... much, much older. In fact the Vatican Observatory is one of the oldest astronomical institutes on earth.

Perhaps old and good are not synonymous in science, although the astronomers continue to study starlight of stars long dead.

As for revelations, past or future, I suggested in my book, *Visualization—Creating Your Own Universe*, that all visions are subjective.

“Subjective religious visions are called Revelations. Subjective non-religious visions (unless held by famous people) are often referred to as hallucinations. Hallucinations can be subdivided into artistic, political, social, idealistic, and a whole array of inspired non-religious fantasies, delusions or insights. Revelations fall essentially into two categories, the pragmatic (aimed at organizing people) and the prophetic (aimed at scaring people). Both deal with influencing others directly. There has never been a prophecy of a carrot that was not accompanied by a stick. The prophetic visions are usually symbolic in nature, i.e. misunderstood by all people who attempt to give them a fundamentalist interpretation. There is a very basic characteristic of all visions. They can never really be shared. People who claim allegiance to a vision of another human being become followers, never those who implement the original vision.”

Nevertheless, as you can see, good ideas seldom die, and if their originators do, there are always others who seem more than willing to pick up the banner, and joyfully make fools of themselves. I should know. I used to be quite dogmatic myself. I once held dogmatic faith in both, science and religion.

Yet, in spite of the Flat Earth Society’s persistent efforts, the scientists decided to forsake sanity and to round off the edges of Earth into an irregular globe. For their sake I have placed this whole chapter in THE PAST.

I shall return to this matter in THE PRESENT.

Alas, you can’t win them all.

In the meantime, other scientists (particularly the astrophysicists but other specialties obediently followed suit) decided that it all started, and I mean ALL, with the

Big Bang. No one cared to define just how big the bang was, but who cares about details. Scientists deal mostly with things so small that they cannot see them or, although very large, so far away that they cannot see them. A harmonious equilibrium? And after all, at the time of the big bang there was only one universe to worry about. Today, they would probably say 'a' rather than 'the' big bang.

Nevertheless, even with just one universe, this new cosmological model calls for a really enormous Big Bang, some 13.7 billion years ago. Ever since then the Universe continued to expand, on and on, and would continue to do so until it runs out, they said, of the original momentum, at which time it would slow down to a momentary standstill, and then would begin to collapse to its original form. Actually, originally the universe had no form, there was, apparently nothing before the Big Bang, but, as we all know, what goes up, must come down. Ergo—the Big Crunch was proposed.

Unfortunately there was a problem. There was not enough mass (matter to laics) to create sufficient gravitational pull to make the universe contract upon itself.

No problem, said the theoretical cosmologists.

Since there is no God to do the work for us (as the believers believe He did at the very beginning, before the scientists thought of the Big Bang), let us suppose, they said, (the scientists, not the believers) that there is matter that we cannot see, or measure, or smell, or... detect with our state-of-the-art instruments. Let us give it a scientific name, they said, and call it Dark Matter, which, now that it's named, will provide the necessary reverse impetus. Oh, yes. And if there isn't enough Dark Matter, we'll think of something else. Like Dark Energy, for instance. Not just so dark as to be invisible to our eyes, but outside the ultra violet and/or infrared spectrum. A sort of Dark Light.

Good idea! After all, Einstein did say that imagination was more important than knowledge, and the scientists were very short of the latter commodity.

In 1934 Fritz Zwicky postulated the existence of Dark Matter (not to be confused with Antimatter, Dark energy, Dark fluid, Dark flow or anything visible at all—a little like God, although God, according to believers, could also be light yet remain invisible). This would account for the missing mass in the orbital velocities of galaxies and

suchlike. In no time at all, the invisible Dark Matter was observed (sic!) in rotational speeds of galaxies in clusters. Later, it was confirmed in the temperature distribution of hot gas in galaxies and clusters of galaxies.

Bingo!

Oops!

The Universe continued to expand!

No problem, said the learned scientists. We've already thought of Dark Energy. Let us postulate that it is an invisible energy, which pushes the universe on its wild ride into the unknown. In the standard model of cosmology (that's scientific lingo to describe what we thought of last), Dark Energy currently accounts for 73% of the total mass-energy of the universe.

With a little effort, we shall make the whole universe invisible, and ask God to create a new one.

### Chapter 3

#### **What We Were**

*The results of political changes are hardly ever those which their friends hope or their foes fear.*

Thomas Huxley, British biologist (1825—18950)

**Forget invisible matter** and equally invisible energy and listen to us, said the priesthood. Our ideas are much better. If we read exactly what is written in the Bible, some 6000 years ago, the Almighty God had created us. At least Adam was created. Eve was built-up around one of our ribs. No disrespect intended, but, if we are to believe the fundamentalists, it was the best the Almighty could do. At least we (men, or one of us) weren't lonely anymore.

Then we screwed up. Adam and Eve did. They ate an apple from the tree of knowledge and got kicked out from Eden. Seems like a harsh punishment for eating a lousy apple. On the other hand, maybe Eden wasn't all that much after all.

Anyway, we went forth and began to multiply, and multiply, and multiply, and didn't stop to this day. In fact, we continue to multiply. We're about to hit 7 billion! Maybe we did, already. Who can tell in this crowd? I bet

neither Adam nor Eve would have ever guessed it. Had they known, they probably would have left that apple alone. Boy, did we ever multiply?

That's the popular version.

Earlier, some 3 million years earlier, before anyone thought of an Almighty God, some apes developed a forward propelling toe, which enabled them to walk forward on a flat terrain with much greater dexterity. Encouraged by their toe, they soon came down from trees, and got down (no pun intended) to the business of leading a life on earth. This bunch of primates had a long way to go.

We had been given all sorts of funny names. Depending where or when our bones were found, and possibly for some other reasons, they were given different names. The oldest were, reputedly, *Australopithecus afarensis*. A little later, paleontologists came up with another unpronounceable name, the *Ardipithecus ramidus*, whose bones were said to reach back some five million years.

Some people think a lot of their bones.

I heard of a construction site where work has been delayed for six months because during excavation the contractor had found some supposedly human bones, which instantly became sacred to the First Nations. To this day I have no idea how they knew they were sacred. The delay cost the developer a small fortune.

Finally, after at least ten different species, at long last came *Homo sapiens*, followed by *Homo sapiens sapiens*. That's us. We, the Hss, have been around for some 200,000 years. *Homo sapiens*, the species to which we all belonged until very recently, is now regarded as the link between *Homo erectus* and *Homo sapiens sapiens*. The *Homo neanderthalensis* got lost somewhere in the translation. He is now regarded as a completely different species. No matter. Or maybe not. We shall see...

So much for old bones.

Later, much later, we have been told that at the time of conception, a soul, an external entity, invaded us, or our bodies, and stayed with us until we died—or until we were excommunicated, in which case we suffered eternal damnation at a place called hell. Those who were not excommunicated, providing they were non-atheists, were

still free to go to heaven, after they died of course, unless they were really nasty, in which case, after their bodies were buried, their souls went on to purgatory. After they got cleaned up, they would rise to heaven, where they remained, presumably bored stiff, for ever-after. And that's a very long time to be bored.

If we decided to be atheists, we could do anything we wanted to do, because we didn't have to have a soul. Nor did a soul have to have us. We were free.

By the way, the Christian hell is reserved exclusively for Christians, with the membership later extended to include the Moslem, and is not to be confused with Sheol, Gehenna, Hades, the Valley of Hinnom, Tartarus, or a number of other resorts that are not nearly as nasty as the Christian/Moslem God/Allah has determined for his exclusive members. On the other hand, it is a well known fact, that many people are well capable of creating private hells for themselves right here, on Earth, but such are usually terminated on their departure from their bodies, referred to as dying. Later, after they die, they are free to start again. That is known as reincarnation. Of course for that, you need a soul. No soul—no incarnation. Sorry. Unless you have an Atma, of course.

But it would be grossly unfair to call your attention to hell, without giving equal time to heaven. Sometime ago, I had occasion to write an essay entitled *Heaven*. At the risk of offending some people, here are some excerpts (with small adaptations).

“Some very religious followers think that if they blow themselves to kingdom come while murdering some innocent people who disagree with their demands, they will take the elevator directly to paradise where they will be instantly surrounded by forty beautiful concubines, or women, or wives. (I am told this has been upgraded to 72 virgins). I have a slight problem with this image of the ever-after, but that's probably because I enjoy, right now, quite enough problems with just one, single concubine, aah... woman, aah... wife. Actually she is whatever she chooses to be. I recall Shakespeare's prognosis: *I know I am too mean to be your queen, and yet too good to be your concubine*. Perhaps in heaven she can be all three. I'll just do my best to enjoy them all.

Then there are those who'd rather recline on puffed-up,

fluffy clouds, surrounded by ever-smiling, perhaps also seventy-two, angels strumming their golden harps. I strongly suspect the angels would be attired in Mozartesque regalia, and be conducted by the immaculately tailed, fiddling Tarzan, known to the aficionados as André Rieu. They would play on and on and on. Forever and ever...”

“And then we have the serious guys (and dolls).

They (we) will spend their (our) eternity at the feet of their (our) chosen deity (catalogue available at the gate), basking in His (Her) glory, rejoicing with the (above mentioned) angels. They (we) will be peeking down, way down, (with just the most innocuous of smirks) at the poor saps who still didn’t even make it to the antechamber of the heavenly palace. Here we shall luxuriate in lavish and eternal peace, serenity, and peace. And serenity. Our joy will in no way be tempered by our knowledge (we shall be fairly omniscient) that our aunt and uncle, possibly also that second cousin (she was a bitch), are frying dead (though seemingly alive) on the sharp prongs of the glowing spits wielded by the long-tailed and horned (if not horny) devils.

Anyone for Florida?”

*“Surely for the godfearing awaits a place of security, gardens and vineyards and maidens with swelling breasts, like of age, and a cup overflowing.”*

This is another option offered by the Qu’ran in Sura LXXVIII, *The Tiding*.

To each his (her?) own.

Does any of this have anything to do with the Bible?

Well, if we take the symbolic meaning, the story changes, well... fundamentally.

“So God created man in his own image, in his own image created he him.” (Genesis 1:27)

or... (see Chapter 13, then come back).

“So the undefined objects of worship, (presumably some sorts of states of universal consciousness), created Adam in their image, making him, likewise, an individualized state of consciousness”

And nothing more.

How do we know? Because only in chapter 3 verse 21 of Genesis, “unto Adam and his wife did Lord God (*Elohim*, i.e.: objects of worship) made coats of skin, and clothed them.” Just think about it. They not only were

naked but *they had no skins!* Obviously God didn't sew actual coats, as in fur-coats, for the couple. Since a moment ago, and probably for a few billion years—there is no time in Paradise, remember, it's like heaven—they were stark naked (in fact bodiless), had they put on real fur-coats they would have burned up with heat. And think of the smell...

Now that was long after Eve had given Adam the apple (Women! You can't live with them, and according to the Objects of Worship, you can't live without them). Surprising though it may seem, the apple came from the 'tree' of knowledge, making Adam aware that he was no longer just a free, individualized state of consciousness able to spend eons gallivanting around Eden, not even worried about any physical skin, let alone a body. But worst of all, Adam became aware of his ego, the single most powerful trait of alienation. He no longer felt an integral, inseparable part of the omnipresent consciousness. He felt apart. Kicked out. He became aware of duality.

How do I know? Because there is no time without duality. Time is a function of the physical universe, not one consisting exclusively of a state of consciousness wherein whatever you imagine—is. Do you remember how much you could do in a single dream?

The holiday was over. Adam became aware of duality, and he became part of it. He had a body. He also became aware of good and evil (Genesis 3:22). Before that, he was like god, he couldn't behold evil. His eyes were too pure. And now? And now he'd spend the rest of his existence trying to find his way back. It will take a long time. Aren't we all still trying?

Alas, his devolution had begun.

At least, that what the Bible says. Not the nonsense you hear from the fundamentalists. While, as I have already pointed out, the Bible is written in a highly symbolic idiom, making it virtually incomprehensible to fundamentalists, scientific and religious alike. Even when deciphered, though it then reads like guidelines for the living (or how to be happy regardless of circumstances), the reader is not to regard himself as a product of biological evolution (sorry Charles), but as a spiritual being using the biological construct as a means to experience the process of becoming.

The biologists and their scientifically minded confreres who do not study symbolism, nor do they venture into the



mystical nature of man, will, as far as the Bible is concerned, remain for now in the dark.

To cheer up the late developers who say that since vast majority of people take the Bible literally they can't all be wrong, let me suggest an equal number does not understand quantum mechanics, yet not one of the stubborn scientific fundamentalists claims that therefore the quantum theory must be wrong. Furthermore, a number of biblical stories have been known long before biblical times, yet, in spite of the extended Kindergarten, they continue to be taken literally, rather than as stories designed to illustrate *spiritual* truth. It seems that indeed, many are called but few are chosen. The vast majority of people choose the easy way out, a way not requiring any effort or study, or hours of contemplation; they *choose* to remain ignorant.

When fully understood, the Bible is a superb handbook of Pragmatic Realism.

The doubters should not be that surprised when we consider that among the countless millions, now billions, of people, there are indeed very few to match Mozart, or Beethoven, or Verdi, or Shakespeare, or Yeshûa, or Buddha, or any giants of the human species, exceptional or chosen people, who left those millions and billions behind. And even then, the vast majority of people prefer to listen to American Idol than to Georgian Chant or an operatic aria. The ultimate consolation is that our true self is immortal, time a figment of our imagination, and ultimately we are all latent, dormant, if slightly retarded Buddhas. Our time will come.

## Chapter 4

### **The God Diffusion**

*A bad book is as much of a labor to write as a good one, it comes as sincerely from the author's soul.*

Aldous Leonard Huxley, British author (1894—1963)

**Perhaps this is the right place** to express my gratitude to Richard Dawkins. His many books had provided me with many hours of pleasure. And now, his *God Delusion* inspired me to offer *not* an opposing view, but, hopefully, a

complementary one to his stringent defense of human mind, *vis à vis* human emotions, imagination, let alone spirit. Thus my book, *Delusions*, subtitled *Pragmatic Realism*, does not deny Mr. Dawkins's dislike for religions, but broadens the sphere of mind controlling philosophies. As for my quotation above, that of the British author Huxley, the problems start when the author denies having one. If he denies having soul—at least that's Aldous Huxley's opinion.

I might add, that there are many other areas where Dr. Dawkins and I agree. I wholly support his views on the inherent 'evils' of absolutism; on his decrying of tolerance towards others. Also I fully understand and share his scathing condemnation of American, not to mention British, Pakistani, or Afghan self-righteous bigotry. I find it particularly repulsive in "the land of the free", where the Star-spangled Banner is indeed spangled with moral and physical blood of many who are not free at all.

Regrettably, the many are, and will most likely remain, "the masses." They represent the vast majority who have forsaken spiritual (*not* religious but spiritual) development, and have concentrated on amassing the benefits of "natural selection". Perhaps now, through his own arguments, the good doctor will believe, or at least examine, the eastern concept of devolution. It seems valid from Pragmatic Realism point of view.

**This chapter deals with,** no, not 'Delusion', which Dawkins so aptly argued, but Diffusion, as in dissemination, transmission, flow, dispersion or, quite simply, omnipresence. Not faith in a polytheistic god, but the omnipresence of intelligence, life and other attributes of the universe, which instigate and sustain evolution.

As in Universal Laws.

In fact, though our renowned atheist might vehemently deny it, he simply substituted the word Laws, for God, which, he evidently believes qualifies him to call himself an atheist. Yet it is evident that he, as well as his hero, not to say idol, Charles Darwin, both appear to recognize the word 'Laws' as an adequate substitute for the force motivating the universe and all that's in it, to act in a reasonably rational, ever-improving, progressive way.

What's in a name?

In the sense of dismissing a 'religious' concept of god, I most certainly am an atheist, too, although I'd prefer to assign some name to that force that would include benevolence, intelligence and, perhaps even compassion without judgment. Not an easy trio of traits to fulfill. Why benevolence? Because I firmly believe that without such the universe would have long disappeared, either in the vastness of absolute zero, or in an all-annihilating big crunch (which astrophysicists love so much). I leave it to the scientists to choose their preferred option. By the way, the absolute zero is a hell that our sacerdotal friends haven't thought of. As yet.

Yes. I truly believe that we, humans, are in great need of infinite compassion. We seem to have inexhaustible ability to act in most stupid, contemptible way imaginable towards each other, contrary to any logic, common sense or scientific dictates. Just imagine, after some 3 billion years of 'evolution' (or even 6000 years, as reckoned by Christian/Jewish religious fundamentalists), the last century is recognized by many as the bloodiest, the most murderous, in the history of man.

Is this what is meant by evolution? Our enhanced ability and willingness to kill each other?

The total number of deaths during the World War 2 has been calculated at between 50 and 70 million. The best known and by far the most often repeated figures are those of some 6,000,000 Jews having died in the Holocaust. According to the Jewish Virtual Library of the Simon Wiesenthal Centre, the Holocaust account for 5,860,000 deaths, which the Library rounds off to 6,000,000.

That leaves some 54,000,000 non-Jews, who are seldom mentioned. But even those figures pale in comparison to total number of deaths during the 20th century. According to Piero Scaruffi (URL provided below), 160 million people died in a variety of wars during the 20th century. Further references are provided for your personal research.

<http://www.scaruffi.com/politics/massacre.html>  
<http://necrometrics.com/20c5m.htm>  
<http://necrometrics.com/pre1700a.htm> - 20worst

Other statisticians cheer us on with the thought that in the present millennium we are likely to break all previous

records. Of course, there are more of us to kill. Since 1999, we are in danger of adding a cool billion 'live' people before the end of 2011. We are encouraged in this endeavour by all religions and other tax-collecting organizations. They are both encouraging the masses to increase their number, to go forth and multiply, in order to increase the numbers on their collection plates, and of their tax base. After all, someone has to pay for those who produce nothing, right? And don't forget their pensions. Perhaps Einstein was right about the only infinity we could really be sure of.

I'd suggest that science, or scientists, who through the invention of masses of mass-destruction weapons greatly contributed to the efficacy with which one human can kill another, contributed in some measure to this progress. Or is it to evolution? Perhaps, in their wisdom, they were just trying to keep down the population explosion. If so, then they failed. Is this what Natural Selection led us to?

Dawkins states: "Natural Selection (is): the process which, as far as we know, is the only process ultimately capable of generating complexity out of simplicity."

I beg to differ. Well, sir, perhaps you ought to have a chat with my wife regarding the menu, when we expect friends for dinner; or listen to any politician delivering his address on economy; or anyone trying to explain poetry.

Seriously, though, let us try the human mind. Not brain—mind. Simple ideas seem to originate in simple minds—like one belonging to the son of a carpenter—and grow, without the aid of natural selection, to sweep the world. Ideas like '*love your neighbour*'. Or '*do unto others as you'd have them do unto you.*' Are these simple ideas or complex ones. How come so few people can understand them?

Or one might try listening to some Mozart piano progressions. Or Bach's counterpoint. Or it would not hurt anyone to read "*Complexity—The Emerging science at the edge of Order and Chaos*" by M. Mitchell Waldrop. A most excellent book. Of course, most people I know are concerned more with the evolution of human thought than with a bug becoming buggier. Or aren't humans allowed to evolve any more? Perhaps the biologists have joined the ranks of the followers of Esoteric Buddhism. However, *chacun à son goût*.

Frankly, if evolution is to explain to us the nature of

things, I'd rather side with Lucretius, (Titus Lucretius Carus, ca. 99BCE—ca. 55BCE), a Roman poet and philosopher. His epic poem "*De rerum natura*," (*On the Nature of Things*), appeals to the inherent Epicureanism in my Hedonistic nature. And let us never forget that Lucretius followed in the footsteps of Democritus, who seemed to admire empty space as much as the nearly 'empty' atoms thinly dispersed within it. And you'll soon learn (in Chapter 7) how I feel about empty space.

While I share profound distaste for all the sacerdotal classes which under the guise of religious precepts attempt, all too often successfully, to dictate and impose their beliefs on others, I cannot, in good faith, dismiss some, albeit few and far between exceptions, such as St. Francis of Assisi, Father Pio and a number of mystics, as having any ambition in mind other than to serve humanity by their own example. They, those few, didn't *tell* others what to do—they *showed* them. And until I shall find an equal number of atheists who do likewise, I shall reserve my judgment as to the superiority of philosophy espoused by the opposing parties.

Having said that, we have the glaring problem of a number of people who have been nominated as the originators of myths, which later became distorted into religious beliefs. Contrary to the advocates of atheism (in the religious sense myself among them), I share the ancient adage attributed to Socrates, that "unexamined life is not a life worth living". If there are atheists who espouse this sentiment, I am not aware of them. To do so one would have to define life as more than a biological entity. For the most part, the few I've met seem much too busy fighting that which they don't believe in. Which that which they don't believe exists. They seem inspired by Don Quichotte.

But we must be careful.

Krishnamurti warns us that, "Self-knowledge is not knowing oneself, but knowing every movement of thought... So watch every movement of thought, never letting one thought go without realizing what it is. Try it. Do it and you will see what takes place."

Nevertheless, to paraphrase Socrates, until atheists' lives are examined, I shall refrain from assigning my opinion. Since I am essentially a Hedonist, (my only restriction being that I do not, knowingly, derive my

pleasure at someone else's expense), and I freely admit that scientists have contributed somewhat (oh, all right, a great deal) to my everyday comfort, I am still more impressed with the man who said, "These things have I spoken unto you, that my joy might remain in you, and that your joy might be full." He taught us how to live.

**Now we come to the real problem** that might appear to contradict a lot of what I said in my preceding paragraphs. While it is true that Paul of Tarsus should be accorded the authorship of the Christian religions, the same cannot be said of Yeshûa, (or Yehoshûa—meaning Jah is salvation), who became known in the West, under the Greek influence, as Jesus.

As for Paul, there is a quandary. If the Vatican crowded with highly educated clergy are to this day completely incapable, as are their secular Ph.D. counterparts from Oxford, Cambridge, Yale, Harvard, or Sorbonne, of understanding the teaching of Christ, then how can we blame Paul or Tarsus, an ex-Pharisee, whom Yeshûa called, false teachers, hypocrites and offspring of vipers, whose pre-conversion activities included the persecution of Christ's followers, for getting it wrong?

Since the publication of the documents known as The Nag Hammadi Library, we, "the ordinary people", no longer have that excuse. Unless we are afraid to read it under the possible threat of anathema. As one of those commoners, I had occasion to offer my commentary on one of the ancient manuscripts, *The Gospel of Thomas*.

As for myself, having been brought up as a Roman Catholic, later educated by Jesuits, I have not come across anyone who ever knew, or shared their knowledge with me, as to the meaning of the name Jesus. We are, nevertheless, given some hints regarding his nature in the scriptures.

Here are some quotations from the King James Bible, attributed to Yeshûa.

"Why do you call me good? None is good, except one, that is, God." (Luke 18:19) Perhaps we may have to revise our concept of what we mean by 'good'?

"Kingdom of God is within you," (Luke 17:21). This statement defines heaven as a state of consciousness. Also, Kingdom of God is usually referred to as heaven. Thus heaven is within us and, therefore... so is God.

“I am not your master...” (Gospel of Thomas, logion 13). Speaking to Thomas, his disciple.

“My father which is in heaven” (Matthew 12:50) and... “Heaven is within you.” As previously quoted from the Gospel of Thomas. Please note, not just within ‘me’, but also YOU. Yeshûa was not just speaking about himself but about all of us.

And the Gospel of Thomas further assures us that “heaven is within you and without you”. I might add, ‘here and now’.

To confuse the matter thoroughly, once and for all:

*Heaven is within us.*

*God is in heaven.*

*Therefore God is within us.*

Or, if you prefer:

*God is omnipresent, therefore God is within us, and likewise, therefore we are within God.*

This may revise, somewhat, our concept of what is God, but I hope the above makes it reasonably clear what the scriptures have to say about it. If one is a Christian, that’s all one has to believe in. The rest will become easy. Or, you can ignore the Bible and do your own thing. We have freewill, remember? Or... do we?

Thus no one in his or her wildest dreams could possibly accuse Jesus Christ of presenting himself as God. Son of God—yes, not God the son. He hastens to explain that, “*all* who do the will of the father are children of the most high,” (my italics). In fact the statement stating that, “ye are gods,” dates back to King David’s 82nd psalm. If we are to believe the fundamentalists’ chronological calculations, King David lived between 1037BC and 967BC, thus most psalms must have been written about that time, (although some of them may have been written by others, around 539BC, after Jewish exile in Babylon). Either way, both authors/composers date back to long before Yeshûa was born. By no stretch of imagination can we blame Yeshûa for making up stories about our own aspirations to his or anyone else’s divinity. The idea had been long established, and just as long ignored, by the Jewish/Christian tradition.

Not very pragmatic, but very real.

Thus, you and I, providing we obey the laws, presumably those referred to by Charles Darwin, are the

sons and daughters of the same progenitor, or as I prefer to think of it, of the Creative (evolutionary) Force of the Universe, (referred to by Darwin as Laws). Of course, I'd suggest that all these statements refer to our states of consciousness, not our overfed, abused and/or misused physical bodies. Even the most avid atheists no longer think of God as an androgynous anthropomorphic super-animal 'created', before the Big Bang, unto the image and likeness of man.

But the problem lies deeper. Like most scientists, religionists invariably tend towards fundamentalism. As they are more or less compelled take the scientific treatises literally, and they are inclined to do likewise with the Bible. The man who inspired this book is no exception. And there lies the fundamental (no pun intended) problem. The Bible deals almost exclusively with our state (s) of consciousness. If taken literally it is indeed a document that doesn't make much sense. To use Dawkins's literary interpretation:

"The God of the Old Testament is arguably the most unpleasant character in all fiction: jealous and proud of it; petty, unjust, unforgiving control-freak; vindictive, bloodthirsty ethnic cleanser; a misogynistic, homophobic, racist, infanticidal, genocidal, filicidal, pestilential, megalomaniacal, sadomasochistic, capriciously malevolent bully."

I might mention that the Bible is only fiction to the degree to which all philosophical and/or psychological dissertations that use 'stories' to illustrate their theses, are fiction. I might repeat that, in the Bible, any resemblance to historical facts, if any, is purely coincidental.

Indeed, to believe in such a God as described, by my learned hero, in such a fundamentalist manner, one would have to apply and espouse all the adjectives to oneself. After all, aren't we created unto His image and likeness? If, however, anyone were to spend an hour or two (perhaps a little longer...) studying my "*Dictionary of Biblical Symbolism*," none of the above would apply. Perhaps scientists are not disposed towards symbolism.

Even a cursory study of the documents of the Nag Hammadi Library would further disband the nonsense perpetrated by the fundamentalists. Here, too, I might refer the reader to my *Key to Immortality*, which attempts to unravel the wisdom of the Gospel of Thomas. While



Bishop Irenaeus (2nd century AD) of Lugdunom (now Lion in France) who had been canonized most probably for his infamous “*Adversus Haereses*”, or *Against Heresies*, might be forgiven for attempting to destroy Gnosticism, which I would describe as the subjective equivalent of scientific method of objective observation of the past or dead matter (see later chapters). The critics of today have no such excuse. Irenaeus was fighting for his church. All too often the atheists of today seem to be fighting for their ego, thus displaying equal narrowness of mind. Rather as Irenaeus had. Some later saints, I might add ‘of dubious sanctity’, were no exceptions, as were later scientists.

## Chapter 5

### **The Beginning and the End**

*Pragmatism asks its usual question. “Grant an idea or belief to be true,” it says, “what concrete difference will its being true make in anyone’s actual life? How will the truth be realized? What experiences will be different from those which would obtain if the belief were false?”*

William James, American psychologist and philosopher (1842—1910)

**Infinity has neither**—beginning nor end. If it had, it would not be infinite. We would live in the past, or future, but not in the present. Not in the NOW. Yet... as William Blake would say in his *Auguries of Innocence*, would we, (you and I) but, “Hold infinity in the palm of your hand, And eternity in an hour.”

Ah, yes. Poetry is not an exact science...

We tend to confuse the tangible with the intangible, the visible with the invisible, the manifested with that which is not manifested—as yet. There is a reason for it.

Frankly, we’ve got it all wrong. We, or at least all the scientists I’ve ever met, live in the past. We, or they, ignore the present. The NOW. The true reality.

We study the light of distant stars that, all too often, is already dead—only the light, the information about them, reaches us with delays of, sometimes, millions of years. Yes, many of those stars are very, very dead. We do the same with the galaxies; we try to reach, backwards, to the

first nanoseconds after the ‘big bang’ that might have never really taken place. We only think it had. If it had ever taken place, it also died somewhere, in the antiquity of billions of years. And, after all, a big bang would have to be followed by a big crunch. Alas, as already discussed in Chapter 2: *Where We Were*, there is not enough mass in the universe to pull us together again; to reverse the ‘ever-expanding’ universe. No matter. When we cannot find observations to fit our theories then we invent items like dark matter, or dark energy, to fit our inept concepts of reality. We employ the same method when studying our bodies, our physical bodies, pretending that we are studying reality, and not the shadow that reality has left behind. Alas, even that doesn’t work. Of late, the theoretical scientists had spent billions of our hard earned dollars to ‘prove’ that the universe not only isn’t about to shrink, but that it continues to expand ever-faster. And how do they know this? By studying the past. The long, long dead past. They study light, photons, that left the stars thousands of years ago. To repeat, stars that might well be dead. They study the corpses. Like our physicians. The cells in our bodies are in a continuous process of renewal. All the cells. And what to the physicians study? The cells that are dying, or are already dead. They are studying those left behind.

Yes, we definitely live in the past. This may prove to be a recurrent theme in this book. I often think that we have forgotten more than we shall ever learn. Distant echoes of Golden Age?

So let us look at our past. No, not biblical, or even scientific. Let us look at our lore. Once I wrote yet another essay. I called it *Vanishing Worlds*. You may find it amusing. It is in Volume I of my *Beyond Religion* collections. I made a few changes to make it belong in this book. Here’s part of it.

“I had a vision.

In it, each man and woman was a universe interconnected with every other man and woman by that which they each held in common. That shared, or objective, universe was but a tiny fraction of the richness of ideas, thoughts, dreams, hopes, which fomented within their individual minds. But it was objective. It was that which was common to most of them. It was that which they

agreed on. It was a point of reference. That's all. Just a point of reference.

A critical mass of shared ideas determines the nature of the universe detectable to our physical senses.

In the past, such old, now dissolved worlds, had been handed down to us as lore: Mu, Lemuria, Atlantis, had all been very real to the men and women who inhabited those conglomerates of ideas, we call an objective universe. As we progress, evolve, the subjective mind rejects the old to make room for the new. Most people find it difficult to accept that Lemuria or Atlantis ever existed.

Well, they did, but not in the way we imagine.

Could our glorious universe cease to exist, as did the worlds of our past? The stars, galaxies... trees, flowers... mountains and oceans... the human heritage of culture, civilizations? Was the earth once flat? Could a sailor fall over the edge—if he believed in it hard enough? Does an adamant, unshakeable faith have the power to create reality? Or is it always the same, tired, polluted, exploited, eternal universe—in which only we are changing....

No, surely this could never be.”

Generations of men speculated on the immortality of soul. Later, when our consciousness became more material, we speculated mostly on possibilities of prolongation of physical life, of our material bodies. From that moment on, we began looking for Ambrosia—for the nectar of immortality. We haven't stopped to this day. Why?

In my vision... well, judge for yourselves.

First I was shown the ancient civilization of MU where now the barren sands of the Gobi desert guard the primordial secrets. Or so I thought! Later I saw the dissolution of Lemuria (were we, once, the lemuroid primates?) supposedly in or under the Pacific or the Indian Ocean. Finally I saw the mighty Atlantis, where inter-planetary travel was common for all men; yet it, too, had been swallowed beneath the turbulent waves of the Atlantic. Shall we ever be allowed to see a single iota of those past universes? No, my friend, the Gobi desert hides no secrets, the depth of the oceans does not secrete past civilizations.

Oh, they did exist—but not where we presume them to have been.

We place them in those inaccessible locations to hide

them from our ineptness of not being able to locate them in our objective universe. But in the oceans of today, they don't exist; they never existed. No more than our world will exist after the end of the present procession of equinoxes. Every 52,000 years, every double grand cycle of the Zodiac, our psyche takes a gigantic leap into the unknown. The leap is so fantastic that, had we been able to retain the memories of previous experiences, our mind would not only reject them, but we would get seriously... unhinged. Perhaps stark, raving, mad.

But you don't have to worry.

When the time comes, we shall once again start at the bottom rung of the ladder. We shall enter Eden with joy in our hearts, with untrammelled faith that this, new Eden shall last forever. It almost will. Every Golden Age is by far the longest. We shall be spared the knowledge that Silver, and Bronze and the Iron Ages will follow. They don't have to, but... such is our nature.

We shall always strive to be gods, creators. Our minds shall crave knowledge even as our bodies crave physical sustenance. We shall always reach out for the stars...

But these changes will only happen when we are ready. Then the critical mass of people will make the next objective universe come into being. Yet even then, some, whose minds cannot shed archetypal memories hidden in the bottomless pit of their subconscious, shall create legends of the universes past. Some will try desperately to reach back in time. Back to an all but forgotten reality. But the critical mass, perhaps even majority of us, after eons of dabbling with the creative surges welling in our ever-expanding consciousness, shall become drunk with power. We shall come to regard the objective worlds as real universes, as worlds of substance.

And when we stray too far... an Avatar shall appear. He will remind us that the True Reality is a state of consciousness. That it exists only within our hearts. That we all, every one of us, create the ephemeral universe we live in. Some of us are proactive, some reactive, but we all take part. The Avatar will remind us that the material reality is an illusion, that it is transient; that, in time, it will dissolve itself. That it will vanish. He will remind us that the True Reality is never physical, material, but that It has

its Being within the realm of the infinite potential, of inexhaustible ideas. By telling us the Truth, He will attempt to free us from our neurotic attachment to our past anchored in our own creations. We shall sense the Truth and listen to Him carefully, but the price of freedom will be too high for our egos. We would have to give up our illusory world. Our creation. So we shall crucify Him.

Just wait and see....

I wrote this essay in 1997. I could as easily have written it today. At the time, it was inspired by, who else? By Socrates. Was he an atheist? To my knowledge he didn't belong to any religion. That is why, in fact, he had been sentenced to death. Here, he is speaking to Meno:

“The soul, then, as being immortal... and having seen all things that exist... has knowledge of them all; and it is no wonder that she should be able to call to remembrance all that she ever knew about virtue, and about everything; for as all nature is akin, and the soul has learned all things, there is no difficulty in her eliciting or as men say learning, out of a single recollection all the rest, if a man is strenuous and does not faint; for all enquiry and all learning is but recollection...”

We don't sentence our atheists to death anymore. We don't even force them to drink hemlock. Perhaps we've made some progress.

**In the course of this book**, I hope to prove that those invisible particles, so small that we can't see even vast quanta of them, don't really exist, either. They do but they don't. Not really. They exist only for as long as we sustain them with our minds. You'll see what I mean.

Furthermore, I also hope to prove that the reality you regarded from the moment you were a baby as real, does not really exist either. Nor do you exist, nor does your body. Nor any part of you. Nor the chair you sit on. I'll show that what the old masters were telling us is real, only they didn't have the means, the words, the metaphors to convey the knowledge that was within them.

Conversely, I'll show you what is real. Later, in the PRESENT, I'll show who you really are. And why. And... you will be amazed!

## Chapter 6

### **Why We Were: Phase One**

*Education: A succession of eye-openers each involving the repudiation of some previously held belief.*

George Bernard Shaw (1856-1950) British dramatist, critic, writer.

#### **THE KINDERGARTEN**

(Excerpt from *Beyond Religion I*, Essay #52)

**“It begins when** the rudimentary consciousness asserts its will to survive as an individual unit. An ameba, a virus, a bacterium. The mono-cellular entity becomes aware of the inside and the immediate outside of itself. It defines its territory, its boundaries. The primitive consciousness learns the laws of survival by re-embodiment within ever more complex physical forms. Each re-embodiment is designed to increase the scope of its operations. The Sanskrit scriptures place the number of transmigrations of (each individualization of) consciousness at 8,400,000. Hopefully this number includes the second phase of our (human) evolution, though I doubt it. Suffice to say that the primary stage of our existence consists exclusively of assuring physical survival and wellbeing (through which consciousness can experience the process of becoming).

The learning process in this phase relies on repetitive conditioning. The method is that of trial and error. The repetitions serve to develop a subconscious—a storehouse of information, on which the primitive consciousness can draw to survive within its embodiment in ever changing environments. Its responses to challenges are reactive, i.e. automatic or instinctive. There is little evidence of free will or deductive reasoning; although the acquired experience is carefully stored in the genetic code of the biological constructs the entity produces to advance its evolution. At this stage, the individualized consciousness is subject to the indomitable laws of nature. A mistake costs it its life.”

And nature is a very cruel mistress.

The main problem with Kindergarten is that there is no

discernible communication. What little there might be, by observation only, is immediately adapted to one's own survival. Otherwise, it is ignored. This acute, purposeful self-centeredness seems to persist in some individualized unit of awareness for many eons. I know people who behave in this fashion even today, a few million years hence.

Nevertheless, nature in her wisdom has equipped our rudimentary units of intelligence with genetic memory storage, well ahead of any computer. This code carries most if not all the instructions for survival, short of the unit coming across new, unprecedented hurdles. In such circumstances, one of two things can happen. Either it follows the input from its genetic code, or, by accident or design, it tries something new. If the new works, it becomes incorporated into the revised, enhanced code, and is passed on to future generations in order to assist them in survival. I believe this is one way of looking at Darwin's "survival of the fittest," although "survival of the most resourceful" again, by accident or design, might, perhaps, be a better way to describe the Kindergarten. Nevertheless, the Kindergarten is the only phase of our evolution wherein the process of natural selection reigns supreme. Millions of years of natural selection results in a veritable plethora of most diverse, complex and beautiful organisms imaginable—not the least of which is man. Alas, at the end of the School Year, man and natural selection must part company.

Thus, the learned biologists must resign themselves to deal only with primitive life forms. Unless they prefer to sit back, wait, and see what happens to their own bodies. It might prove to be a very, very long wait.

While the process of natural selection is, by definition, a process, i.e. it is not limited by time and thus it continues even today, in more advanced forms, e.g. in humans, all too often its built-in rare but necessary tendency toward mutation, turns against the organism it helped develop, by attacking the organism's immune system. The extremely prevalent rheumatoid arthritis is a well-known example of this. I suppose one could say that if it doesn't kill one, it makes one stronger. Regrettably, it takes a lot of joy out of life.

Amusing though it may seem, there are people, today, who seem motivated exclusively by the above method.

They have not, as yet, taken charge of their own natural selection. They still have a 50/50 chance of survival. A little like tossing a coin. In fact I met very few people who were willing to take full responsibility for their actions. There was always someone else to blame. Perhaps, at their stage of development, they were doing the right thing.

There is one other vital lesson that we were to have learned in the Kindergarten. The lesson deals with evolutionary absolutism. It is also very pragmatic. It states quite simply: kill or be killed. You must kill to eat, thus to survive: carnivore and herbivore alike. Let us never forget that it is the same life-force that enlivens both fauna and flora. Kill or be killed is not a suggestion, it is an absolute prerequisite of natural selection.

It is unfortunate that the majority of the human species still conforms to this primitive evolutionary demand. In fact, many of us don't just kill to survive, we kill because we enjoy killing. We enjoy the hunt. It seems that natural selection has not succeeded in eliminating this trait, as yet, from the human species. Will it ever?

## Chapter 7

### **Atheist's Delusion**

*In all life one should comfort the afflicted, but verily, also, one should afflict the comfortable, and especially when they are comfortably, contentedly, even happily wrong.*

John Kenneth Galbraith  
Canadian-American economist and author (1908—2006)

**It all started with the Democritus** of Abdera, some 2400 years ago, who declares that: "Nothing exists except atoms and empty space. All else is an opinion." In his day, atoms were pictured as tiny particles, invisible and solid. Of course, in ancient Greek, *a-tomos* means indivisible, thus making atoms the smallest particles around.

This vision of reality persisted for more than two millennia. Then, all hell broke loose. At the beginning of 20th century, the physicists decided that atoms were divisible after all; that they consisted of even smaller particles. Some, a hundred thousand times smaller.



Of course, some elements have many more protons and/or neutrons than others. A carbon atom, for instance, has 6 protons and, usually 6 neutrons. Its many isotopes, however, can have from 2 to 16 neutrons. An extreme example would be roentgenium with 111 electrons, though with electrons usually contributing less than 0.06% to an atom's total mass, and some 1836 electrons needed to add up to the mass of a single proton or neutron, we needn't worry about excessive mass invading the space around the nucleus.

So we can see that although the number of electrons would influence, marginally, any calculations of the total mass they might add to space surrounding the nucleus, the subatomic particles are so incredibly small that the effect on the total mass would be, I repeat, negligible. But these were just numbers, without anyone apparently trying to visualize them.

And then problems started in earnest.

Some did try to visualize them.

There were many comparisons. If the nucleus of a hydrogen atom, consisting of a proton and neutron, were to be magnified to the size of an orange, then the cloud of electrons (in case of hydrogen just one) in orbit around this nucleus would measure several miles across.

At the onset the last century, Sir Arthur Eddington, an British astrophysicist and philosopher of science, declared that, taking into account the distance between the nucleus and the orbiting electrons, atoms were mostly empty space. More precisely, he calculated that they were approximately 99.999999999999% empty space. To wit, our bodies, the Earth, the world, all consist of atoms.

Perhaps, we might wonder, perhaps he was right. After all, surely, we all believe every word a knighted scientist would say. Always. Perhaps, to use his words, "not only is the universe stranger than we imagine, it is stranger than we can imagine." As for the electron, which has (as mentioned) 1823 times smaller mass than a proton, do we really care about them at all?

A void is a void is a void.

Thus, we are stuck with a problem. A very scientific problem, yet one about which scientists don't seem too keen to talk about.

One could say that the so-called atheists are

preoccupied with 0.0000000000001% of reality, which surrounds us. The rest they leave to... the 'faithful'?

*Credo in unum Deum... ..factorem cæli et terræ, visibilium omnium et invisibilium.*

Assuming scientists believe in the existence of atoms, they are not so far from the dictates of the Roman Church. All that is "visible and invisible". That's saying a lot about almost nothing.

Towards the end of his book Dawkins accepts the quantum reality around us, and writes that we cannot perceive the empty space of, or within, rocks, and see them only as solid, because such perception as we are equipped with, is all that's necessary for our survival; that, at least for now, we are not disposed to be able to navigate the reality of atoms. What he fails to point out is that while as animals we have sufficient perceptions to survive, we should not trust, nor draw any intellectual conclusions, from the input of our senses, as representing reality. That, regrettably, is exactly what religions of the world teach. Religions which he rejects out of hand.

Unfortunately for the scientists, the spaces between the stars, not to mention the galaxies, are proportionately even greater. You could say that the voids, of which the stars (also) consist, are separated by the astronomical voids of outer space. Thank heaven for black holes. At least they contribute a little density for the scientists to get their teeth into (although I don't recommend it, unless approved by your dentist). They, however, the scientists, seem to leave those solid jewels of the universe alone. Who knows, perhaps gods live in them?

Very, very, extremely, solid gods?

If we discount the fields of energy, then there is great probability that we, you and I, and the Earth, and the universe all around us, are essentially very EMPTY SPACE.

So much of 'physical' reality.

The fascinating thing, at least for me, is that scientists, who often base their theories on speculations, as in theoretical this-that-or-the-other, are invariably as fundamentalist in their assumptions as their counterparts in the field of theology. Since I began writing on the subject, the world had begun with a big bang, invisible matter was postulated to enable the world to collapse in a big crunch,

only to find, soon after, that the world continued to expand, at an ever-faster rate. This last acceleration left the scientists completely baffled.

Next to nothing, a huge mass of near empty space, speeding into the unknown nothing at astronomical velocities.

**And now a word** to aid the avowed atheists, who must be looking for ammunition to use against the theists, deists, and other believers in the intangible. (I feel particular indifference towards all of them—not to the people but to their views. It all seems to me to be much ado about nothing). Nevertheless this is what Jiddu Krishnamurti, of whom Henry Miller once said: “Krishnamurti is one man of our time who may be said to be a master of reality... ..I know of no living man whose thought is more inspiring.”

Jiddu Krishnamurti's words:

“Your belief in God is merely an escape from your monotonous, stupid and cruel life.”

Aren't we glad that we all have a wonderful life?

Mr. Dawkins' highly amusing tirade about the god of the Old Testament is based on the most fundamentalist assumptions imaginable. It is abundantly obvious that Dr. Dawkins has never heard about symbolism that is so prevalent in both, the Old and the New Testaments. Perhaps symbolism is also inherent in scientific calculations, and that is why they don't make much sense to amateurs such as I am. If so then I'm also not aware of such. So far, no scientists cared to enlighten us. Perhaps the near-empty constituents of the near-empty universe move only symbolically into the great near-empty unknown?

It's highly likely that two thousand years ago people, in order to survive in a vastly more challenging social environment, had to be vastly more intelligent. They may have been also more skilled at picking up symbolic meaning at will—except for those few who misunderstood the teaching and, as their equivalents today, were determined to destroy it. The teaching, which had been intended solely as a means of freeing man from the constraints and limitations imposed on them by distorted precepts of Judaism, now put new noose around peoples' necks. To blame the teaching for such a turn of events would be like blaming science for the ineptitude of most

scientists.

Most, not all.

In all walks of life only a few are chosen. Perhaps only a few are capable of sublimating their ego to serve humanity?

Fanatics in the ranks of religions and science are chained to their dogmas, determined to destroy each other. To blame only half of the equation will not lead us to Pragmatic Reality. As science is based on intellect and religion on emotions, I expect more from the scientist. Yet, to think that we can eliminate emotions from our life, is little more than a scientist's delusion; even as setting limits to human potential is the delusion of all atheists.

On the other hand, there is a reason why people succumb to religion, which later takes over their minds and allows priesthood to control their lives. And the reason is Darwinian absolutism. In its truest sense, Darwinian natural selection deprives people from any say in their future, in their developments. The religionists state that we are more than what nature, in her bounty, has given us; that we can make our own decisions regarding our evolution. I don't mean religion as understood by masses. They will forever (although that's a really long time) be exploited by some mental, intellectual or political oligarchy.

The dogmatism promulgated by the advocates of natural selection deprives man of any say, of any decision, in their own (forthcoming) wellbeing. Such dogmatic approach must be, and always is, balanced by some other absolutes, which might offer man freedom and assure him hope of eventual liberation. No dogma is a good dogma. At best it might be a probability, never an absolute. In this sense the Darwinian biologists sin as much as the religionists. Perhaps they ought to stick to studying lower forms of life, and leave man alone. Even religionists claim that man has freewill—even though they, admittedly, subjugate it later to their own advantage. The Darwinians don't even offer that.

The more I read Dawkins, the more I see that Darwin is god, Darwinianism is a religion, and Darwinian biologists are its high priests. And if you don't fit into god's plans and his priests' dictates, then you simply don't matter. You are excommunicated. Condemned to everlasting ignorance.

In a novel *Close Call 1: Survival of the Fittest* (sic), a gentleman by the name of Randi Hacker, gives an imaginative description of a post apocalyptic world, in which a group of people turn to strict Darwinian directives. Survival is all. The consequences are not pleasant.

I recommend it to all affirmed Darwinians.

## PART TWO — PRESENT

*I am going to tell you what nature behaves like. If you will simply admit that maybe she does behave like this, you will find her a delightful, entrancing thing. ...nobody knows how it can be like that."*

Richard Phillips Feynman (speaking about quantum theory)  
American physicist (1918—1988) recipient of joint Nobel Prize in Physics in 1965.

### Chapter 8

#### **Fundamentalism in Religion and Science**

*Science is organized common sense—where many a beautiful theory was killed by an ugly fact.*

Thomas Henry Huxley  
British biologist, defender of Darwin's theory (1825—1895)

**Sometime ago I read a book**, which shook my faith in science. I have been attracted to it by its title: *The Elegant Universe*. It was written by a fairly well-known author of popular science books, whose ambition seems to have been to enlighten the reader, who heretofore was completely ignorant with most aspects of cosmology, physics, and particularly theoretical physics. For those who don't know, theoretical physics is a lot like religion. The scientists make assumptions, and then hope against hope that, perhaps, one day someone somewhere might confirm their speculations with 'scientific' observations. Sometimes it might work. Usually it doesn't. Just like with religions. Many religions.

Let me start by saying that I am in awe at Mr. Green's attempt to cram virtually the sum-total of human scientific achievement, as pertaining to the world we live in, into a little more than four hundred pages. A noble aim—a near-