

NECESSITY OF DESIGN: An Open Letter Supporting Creation from NASA Rocket Scientist Wernher Von Braun

For me, the idea of a creation is not conceivable without invoking the necessity of design. One cannot be exposed to the law and order of the Universe without concluding that there must be design and purpose behind it all. In the world around us, we can behold the obvious manifestations of an ordered, structured plan or design. We can see the will of the species to live and propagate. And we are humbled by the powerful forces at work on a galactic scale, and the purposeful orderliness of nature that endows a tiny and ungainly seed with the ability to develop into a beautiful flower. The better we understand the intricacies of the Universe and all it harbors, the more reason we have found to marvel at the inherent design upon which it is based.

While the admission of a design for the Universe ultimately raises the question of a Designer (a subject outside the realm of science), the scientific method does not allow us to exclude data which lead to the conclusion that the Universe, life, and man are based on design. To be forced to believe only one conclusion—that everything in the Universe happened by chance—would violate the very objectivity of science itself. Certainly there are those who argue that the Universe evolved via a random process, but what random process could produce the brain of a man or the human eye?

Some people suggest that science has been unable to prove the existence of a Designer. They admit that many of the miracles in the world around us are hard to understand, and they do not deny that the Universe, as modern science sees it, is indeed a far more wondrous thing than the creation that medieval man could perceive. But they still maintain that since science has provided us with so many answers, the day will soon arrive when we will be able to understand even the creation of the fundamental laws of nature without invoking divine intent. They challenge science to prove the existence of God. **But must we really light a candle to see the Sun?**

Many men who are intelligent and of good faith say they cannot visualize a Designer. Well, can a physicist visualize an electron? The electron is materially inconceivable, and yet it is so perfectly known through its effects that we use it to illuminate our cities, guide our airliners through the night skies and take the most accurate measurements. What strange rationale makes some physicists accept the inconceivable electron as real, while refusing to accept the reality of a Designer on the ground that they cannot con-

ceive of Him? I am afraid that, although they really do not understand the electron either, they are ready to accept it because they managed to produce a rather clumsy mechanical model of it borrowed from rather limited experience in other fields, yet they would not know how to begin building a model of God.

I have discussed the aspect of a Grand Designer at some length because it might be that the primary resistance to acknowledging the “case for design” as a viable scientific alternative to the current “case for “chance” lies in the inconceivability, in some scientists’ minds, of a Designer. The inconceivability of some ultimate issue (which always will lie outside scientific resolution) should not be allowed to rule out any theory that explains the interrelationship of observed data and is useful for prediction.

We at NASA often are asked what the real reason was for the amazing string of successes we have had with our Apollo flights to the Moon. I think the only honest answer we could give was that we tried to never overlook anything. It is in that same sense of scientific honesty that I endorse the presentation of alternative theories for the origin of the Universe, life, and man in the science classroom. It would be an error to overlook the possibility that the Universe was planned rather than happening by chance.

With kindest regards.

Sincerely yours,

(signed) Wernher von Braun, Ph.D.

National Aeronautics and Space Administration

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