

## The Impossibility of Succession

**S** Dad! What do you intend to talk about tonight?

**F** What do you want to hear about? You decide.

**S** I'd like to know more about the rest of your journey from doubt to faith.

**F** OK! I'll give you a brief of what happened to me during the two years of uncertainty and doubt which I spent mostly in reading, discussing with many believers and infidels, meeting some scholars and corresponding with others. This had opened new and wide intellectual horizons for me I also made several relationships that were too much for me at that age...

At the end of the second year of uncertainty, I was gradually approaching the coast of safety and comfort; the huge waves of doubts were subsiding and the boat of reason has directed me to the coast of faith. There, I tied my boat and took some rest after that enjoyable hard work. I looked at the sea and its waves; I imagined its depth, vastness and was astonished to find how I could have passed that journey safely!! I thanked God so many times as I felt that the sea, waves and sands, echoing glorification with me.

**S** What happened after that?

**F** After that I packed my belongings and was ready for the second stage of my journey but this time in the sea of faith, not that of doubt.

**S** Where was this sea of faith?

**F** It was at the university... I've been accepted at the Medical College. I was interested in studying the creation of human beings with the signs of God, the marvelous creation in every cell and the effects of His Power on the performance of different parts of the body. Those years, at the medical college, were absolutely interesting; an experience that satisfied my mind and soul. I also had some nice memories with certain poor deceived students burdened with the influence of the materialists.

**S** Dad! Would you please tell me about some of them?

**F** I remember that there was a student who met an atheist one at the dormitory. The believer tried to discuss faith with the unbeliever to guide him to the right path, but he discovered that his opponent atheist was equipped with ideological background based on Dialectal Materialism. Anyway there was an interesting debate between them. He used to meet me in order to exchange views and get prepared for the next round of debate.

One day, he came and said: "Our fellow refused to believe in anything that cannot be conceived by our five senses. He also added: "the sole resource of knowledge is the five senses; as these senses cannot prove the existence of God, then there is no God." Thereby, I replied: "The senses are responsible for receiving primary data and transfer it to the brain and have it collected, combined and analyzed in order to reach secondary results.

Many things are not conceivable by the senses such as electricity and magnetic waves. Even the brain is not detectable by senses. We know that all scientific discoveries are based upon the brain's analyses of the data and arrive at to get the results which the senses deliver." but he refused and said: "I shall not believe in something that my eyes cannot see overtly." After the student had finished his talk, I noticed that he was weak in his debate with the atheist student. He invited me to their room in order to engage his colleague in another turn of over discussion.

I didn't find it appropriate to have that meeting. But I feared the influence of that atheist on those believers at the residence. Also, he might think that his evidence cannot be defeated! This might result in weakening those people with shaken faith. Thus I decided to go. There, I found the atheist and we had a discussion. He was challenging... I maneuvered around in a practical way but he was not rational. He insisted that anything cannot be seen is not a fact. At that moment I found it necessary to use another method in manipulating the discussion. So I wittingly asked him: "Would you please tell me, who is your father?" He replied "My father? My father's name is..." Then I said "How can you prove that he's your father? Did you see with your own eyes that...?" I wish you were there to see how he stuttered trying to answer in front of his colleagues.

**S** Good debate! But it was offending, Dad!

**F** Should I respect him, while he didn't respect God or even respect his mind?

**S** No... No... Well-done Dad! According to his theory, his mind doesn't exist because his mind is not visible... Anyway it was a good discussion!

**F** This is called contradiction method which says "*Make them abide whatever they are abiding by willingly.*" It's an easy-to-apply principle and proven to achieve good results. This rule can be applied to defeat many ill-supported ideas and put of disarray feeble minded people with weak reason.

**S** Would you please give me an example?

**F** For instance, skepticism... Its followers question everything and they believe that there are no facts. They see everything questionable and uncertain. So there is not a single case to be trusted. They deal with faith in a skeptical manner and hence spread doubt to those who believe in God. You know that if a human being is skeptical about God, praise and glory to Him, and doesn't bother looking for the faith seriously, he will be overwhelmed by Satan and he will forget God.

The skeptic principle can be defeated by one question: "Are you sure your principle is right or are you in doubt of it?"

Therefore, if they were completely sure about their principle, then their principle would be defeated because of their "absolute affirmation." On the other hand, if they were doubtful about their principle, it wouldn't be possible to believe in something which we're doubtful about.

**S** I've read about the skeptic philosophy which spread in different periods throughout history, but it does not exist anymore.

**F** It's not the case, son! In recent history there are skeptical philosophers and skeptic streams that have followed this principle. The most significant ones are those enshrouded with science. For instance, the one which was posed by Marxism when they claimed that the material is the base of existence and there is no existence except for material. It's the origin of all conditions, situations and concepts. Material development leads to the development of intellect because intellect is the reflection of material. Since material is in continuous development, intellect keeps up with the same pace and with each step of material development new ideas come up. Those ideas get their value from the harmony and consistency with the materials from which they are derived.

According to this theory, truth and falsehood, reality and unreality are taken by the same measurement. So there is no absolute reality, but it's related to the condition from which it has originated. The material is in continuous development and so is intellect which follows material progress. Thus there is no absolute reality to be believed in at all times.

**S** This is an extremely dangerous idea because it destroys religion and all its concepts such as the existence of God glory to Him.

**F** Exactly! The Marxist creed says: The idea of God's existence is an outcome of the religious thinking which is a reflection of means of production. Monotheism is a more advanced stage of religious ideas which passed through a period of polytheism. The development of means of production has led mankind into abolishing the concept of God. ***"Satan has made their deeds seem pleasing in their eyes, and has kept them away from the Path."***

**S** Dad! I see that you are calling Marxism a religion...

**F** Yes. It's a religion with ideological, economic and political organizations. It has basics for personal and social relationships too... It is a religion, but not a religion from God. I know that this word surprised you, but I'll talk to you some other time about the meaning of religion for there is no human being without a religion. Even those who fight religions have a religion or some sort of a religion. But I prefer to postpone talking about this subject and continue our discussion about the relativism of reality that Marxism had preached. So how do you respond to their religion and how do you reject their ideology?

**S** It is obvious, Dad! If there is no absolute reality, their ideology is nonsense. According to what they say; the relative reality is a result of a specific materialistic condition, therefore, it won't exist when the materialistic conditions are changed.

**F** And this was the case when the Soviet Union collapsed with Marxist religion and became history.

**S** Dad! I'd like you to speak more about your debates with the unbelievers.

**F** OK! No problem. But let me think of a story that could be suitable for you... Ah... Nice story... happened when I was in my second year at the medical college.

**S** Was it with another student?

**F** No... With one of the professors.

**S** WOW!... What subject was he teaching?

**F** The professor of Physiology, the study of the functions of organs.

**S** And wasn't he an atheist?!

**F** Yes, he was an atheist and he didn't believe in God... But as I told you before when a human innate is inactive, he/she would forget God until a moment when a shock strokes, then the innate nature is reactivated once again.

**S** How come a professor in the field of Physiology disbelieves in God, while he sees the magnificent signs of God in the human body? Didn't he feel amazed by the well-organized body and the interaction of its organs and cells?

**F** There is a group of people "***On their hearts is the stain of the (ill) which they do!***" and another group "***Even if We opened out to them a gate from heaven, and they were to continue (all day) ascending therein.***" "***They would only say: "Our eyes have been intoxicated: Nay, we have been bewitched by sorcery"***", also another group are those who "***Whenever the signs of (Allah) Most Gracious were rehearsed to them, they would fall down in prostrate adoration and in tears.***"

Son! It's not enough for God's signs to be magnificent and clear in order to lead people to believe. God wants faith to be an optional process "***And verily Allah is He Who heareth and knoweth (all things).***"

Haven't you heard this verse of the Holy Quran:

***“If it had been thy Lord's will, they would all have believed,- all who are on Earth! wilt thou then compel mankind, against their will, to believe!”***

**S** You're quite right, Dad! What I could understand from your talk is that there are people with active innate nature who believe in God upon seeing a sign of God and another group, whose innate nature is impaired, will need a shock to have their innate nature reactivated again. However, there is another group who know the fact very well, but they stubbornly reject it.. ***“And they rejected those signs in iniquity and arrogance, though their souls were convinced.”***

**F** Well-done son! That was a good classification.

**S** Which group did your Physiology professor belong to?

The one with impaired innate nature or a stubborn denier?

**F** Listen to the story and you'll find out yourself.

**S** OK Dad! I'm eagerly waiting to hear the story from you.

**F** We were waiting for the Professor to come to the class.

The lesson was about the Physiology of the nervous system... He was a well-known and experienced lecturer in his field. His teaching style was excellent too... He illustrated on the blackboard the neural system and how it is connected. He also explained the symbols he used in the sketch elaborately. He described the way neural cells work, their different types, their interactive and interconnected functions and the resulted systematic and harmonious coordination with commands coming from the front part of the brain, which represents the central sensation section that issues orders to the muscles and moving organs.

In turn, it would receive the sensed information from all parts of the body. The collected information is transmitted to the sensing section where an intentional function is required. The majority of the information is also sent to different parts the brains, which are far away from the sensing section, in order to activate the necessary reactions according to a comprehensive and precise system that saves time and effort for a human being and compensate to his inability to manage the internal functions of his body.

While the Professor was absorbed in his scientific endeavor, doing his best to deliver a great amount of information, I was contemplating what he said and getting more certain of my faith while feeling humble before the magnificence of the Creator Who has created all these organizations in the nervous system of human beings. At the end of the lecture, I followed the professor to his room and asked him: “I have a question unrelated to the lecture, but it's related to the subject.”

He said: "Go ahead"

I said: "This was an amazing system and incredible organization with a high magnificence and precision. According to your lecture, is it possible that this system was created accidentally? Or has it been designed and planned by a Wise and Knowledgeable Creator?" He responded: "This depends on the human's belief." Then he continued "Some believe in a Wise God while others don't."

I said: "I'm seeking your opinion. What do you think based on your knowledge in Physiology? Is it possible that this system is created randomly or has it been planned and designed?"

He paused for a moment and then said: "The probability of the wise creation of the system is higher than its accidental creation." I waited to allow him to grasp the situation and to see his reaction, and then he commented: "This is a religious matter and it is not related to our study. You are a medical student and you know that religion contradicts science."

I replied: "With all due respect, I have a different opinion regarding the irrelevance of the case. This case has a fundamental relation with us, because it can dangerously affect our future." He was surprised by what I said, especially about the 'future danger'.

So he asked: "How?"

I said: "If the so-called belief in God, Heaven and Hell are reality, but we deny or refuse it, then what will be our future after life?"

He said: "The modern science contradicts religious theories."

I said: "How?"

He replied: "Don't you see – as a medical student – the obvious contradiction between the scientific facts and the religious theories?"

I replied: "No! I'll be grateful, if you can guide me to see the conflict between science and religion."

He responded: "The same idea of the eternal life in Heaven, while no disease or death is able to put an end to it. How can this information be compatible with your knowledge about diseases and the withering of cells, which contradicts the idea of eternal life in Heaven?" I said: "Can't we assume that the other life has different rules to this life. As we see difference in the rules related to plants and the ones for animals also the different rules for aquatic and terrestrial animals? Where is the problem in having different rules in the other life?"

He said: "Maybe..."

I felt that he began oscillating like a pendulum between what he used to think and the new horizon that I have opened for him now.

Then he continued: “Why don’t you worry about your lessons instead of these issues?”

I said: “This is a dangerous problem and is related to our future?”

He didn’t respond, so I continued: “Professor! I have all the respect towards you and because I respect you, I ask you to think about this seriously, and I hope you do that.”

I didn’t want to put more pressure on him because he may feel inferior by yielding to one of his students. So it was sufficient to let this seed grow in his mind which eventually might activate his innate nature .Then I said good-bye and left his room.

**S** Have you met him again?

**F** No, I didn’t meet him again. He didn’t give lectures anymore because he retired, and I don’t know anything about him.

**S** It’s very unfortunate that a professor of Physiology doesn’t believe in God. This is like a swimmer in a sea who denies the existence of water! The science of Physiology is entirely about the signs of God! So how come he didn’t see these signs?

**F** *“Many are the Jinns and men we have made for Hell: They have minds wherewith they understand not, eyes wherewith they see not, and ears wherewith they hear not. They are like cattle,- nay more misguided: for they are heedless (of warning).”*

**S** Dad! There are some questions I gathered during discussions with some friends to which I have tried to find answers myself... I could find answers for some, but not all. I couldn’t find a clear answer, which could be understood by the youth at my age... For instance, who created God? This is a question posed by some unbelievers to beat the idea of ‘Everything has a maker’. They say: if there is a Creator for everything, who might have created God? I’m unable to elaborate on the philosophical aspects of this case.

**F** OK! Listen son! Let me simplify it to you.

We don’t say: There is a creator for everything; but we say: For every created thing there is a Creator because God, praise and glory be to Him, is also a thing, but there is nothing similar to Him.

**S** So the discussion is about creatures. But how can we know that those are created? How can we know that they have been created after a time when they were not in existence? How can we know that this is what happened?

**F** Simply; look around you at everything... look at yourself and others, human beings, animals, plants etc... You’ll find that there is a beginning and an end for everything which means it is created. In philosophers’ terminology, it is called: an event but not eternal... There is nothing among the living and

non-live creatures that is eternal and ageless. Therefore every living thing was formed out of a former living thing, and every inanimate thing was formed from a previous inanimate matter... until we reach the primary material for all beings. It is what Frank Allen discussed when he described the second law of Thermodynamics. He proved that the universe has a specified age. That is, it existed at a specific time. Therefore, every single part of the universe is created and there should be a Creator who should be ageless or eternal, not a result of an event.

**S** Here you are. The question is... Why there is no Creator for God?

**F** Let's assume that God has a Creator too... The question will be repetitive. Isn't it?

**S** Yes... assume that we ask: who has created this Creator?

**F** Well... Let's look profoundly into this repetitive question.

If this question was repeated millions of times, would we reach a Creator that no one has created and His existence is ageless and eternal and Who doesn't have to be created for His existence (or as philosophers state "a compulsory existence")?

**S** What if we reached that point?

**F** That Creator we name God... But those "intermediaries or agents" are created like everything in this universe. So they are not God because they need to be created. They have not existed except in our imagination, which couldn't easily accept that there is something that has no creator in the first place. But, finally, this fact is accepted.

**S** What if we continue with the question and say: we won't reach a Creator who has not been created, and who created himself and wasn't created by someone else.... Or do we say: it's not possible to reach an independent existing entity, at the end of this series... what is wrong with this argument?

**F** In this case, there would be no existence at all.

**S** Why?

**F** Because all the parts of this sequence do not derive their existence from anyone... So there is no existence at all... this is not common sense and we know that the universe exists. Therefore it's not possible for this sequence to continue endlessly. On the other hand, it's not possible to say that the universe is being created by a Creator and then assume that the Creator is created by another creator and so on. In conclusion, the existence of such a sequence is impossible.

**S** Dad! Would you please give me an example for the impossibility of such a sequence in order to get a better understanding?

**F** Give me a cent?

**S** Do you want a reward?!

**F** No! I'll get the reward from the One Who created me...

Give me a cent and you'll see.

**S** Here it is, Dad! This is one cent.

**F** Where have you got this cent from?

**S** I got it from my mother.

**F** Where did your mother get it from?

**S** She took it from you.

**F** Where did I get it from?

**S** I don't know, maybe from a shop keeper.

**F** Where did this shopkeeper get it from?

**S** Maybe from one of the customers?

**F** And the customer?

**S** From another person.

**F** Well! Now continue with this succession... Is it possible for the sequence to continue forever, or should there be an end point somewhere?

**S** This sequence will come to an end at the Central Bank which doesn't get money from anywhere; rather, it makes and gives money to others and permits money to be circulated.

**F** Excellent! If someone told you: "This cent has not come from the bank. It moved from one person to another in an infinite sequence. Would you believe that?"

**S** Well-done Dad! That was quite a practical example. Thus eternal succession is rationally impossible, and if it was feasible then we could say that the coins which people use were not made by the Central Bank and we know that this is quite a silly idea.

**F** Son! The impossibility of this series taking place means that there should be faith and belief in a Creator whose existence doesn't depend on anything; and that He is no one but God, praise and glory be to Him.

**S** Here is another question that arises: Why don't we say the same (the impossibility of the eternity of

materials)? Or, why don't we say that material is ageless and nobody has created it?

**F** Because all evidence confirm that material is created and will vanish one day... as we mentioned that the universe itself was created at a specific time which is scientifically proven.

**S** Right!

**F** There is another matter to consider; if there have to be an eternal existence, is it logical to believe that it is a static, limited material which is unwise and without willpower; or to consider it as an eternal, divine, knowledgeable, wise and with absolute willpower?

**S** Of course the Wise, Knowledgeable, Wise and Powerful God is a more likely choice to believe in than an eternal unwise material.

**F** That's why we say that faith is much easier to be accepted than atheism because having faith is common sense but atheism involves many layers of doubts, uncertainty, suspicions, and pretensions which won't end at a specific point as ***“a mirage in sandy deserts, which the man parched with thirst mistakes for water; until when he comes up to it, he finds it to be nothing.”***

**S** Dad! I learnt a lot from your talk... The problem of succession was ambiguous to some extent but this example made it completely clear.

**F** I remembered a nice story about this matter. Once a friend of mine, a Muslim activist, narrated the following story to me:

When he was at high school, he debated with a classmate over the subject of 'believing in God', but his classmate refused to believe and he continued to assert that if God exists, then who has created God? The believer went on explaining the idea of the "Impossibility of Succession", but his classmate didn't believe and said: Where is the problem? It's possible for the succession to go forever and it's unnecessary for the succession to end at a specific point.

Years passed by and the believer was admitted to the College of Technology, while the atheist colleague joined the ruling party. After a while the believer found himself arrested and placed in a cell by the security forces with a number of other Muslim activists. They were arrested because of distributing leaflets anti-Baathist Regime leaflets which were found with one of activists. The interrogator wanted to find out who published these leaflets. The Secret Police believed that the suspect was one of the arrested but could not identify him. When it was the engineer's turn to be interrogated, he learnt that the interrogator is the same class-mate atheist student with whom he had had a debate over the existence of God. During the debate, the former refused to accept the Impossibility of Succession. Their relationship was not smooth at school. So how would it be when one of them was among the opposition party and the other supported the government?

The Engineer said to the Intelligence Officer: "What do you want to know exactly? Who distributed the

leaflet or who published it?”

The Officer said: “What is important is to know who has typed it.”

The Engineer replied: “Let me talk with the brother prisoners and I’ll inform you tomorrow.”

At that night the Engineer and his friends agreed upon a plan each one of them had to play an assigned role. So when the Engineer was called, he said to the Officer: “I had found the main planner, it is Ahmed.” When the Officer asked Ahmed about who has typed the leaflet, he responded: “I don’t know; I got it from Hasan.” When the Officer asked Hasan about the one whom he got the leaflet from, he replied: “Khalid had handed the leaflet to me.”

Khalid had passed the Officer to Nabeel, Nabeel to Sa’ad, Sa’ad to Amjad, and Amjad said: “I got it from the Engineer.” The Officer turned to the Engineer and said: “So it was you who typed the leaflet?” But the Engineer replied: “Never, Ahmed had given that leaflet to me.”

The Officer said: “But Ahmed had got the leaflet from Hasan.”

The Engineer said: “He’s right.”

The Officer said: “And Hasan had got it from Khalid, Khalid from Nabeel, Nabeel from Sa’ad and finally it reached you.”

The Engineer replied: “And I got it from Ahmed... What is wrong with this?”

The Officer said: “Are you mocking me? Do you think that I’m a fool? There must be someone who didn’t get the leaflet from anyone else and he is the one who typed it.” The Engineer responded: “No my friend... What you said now contradicted what you were saying before...It’s possible for the operation of succession to continue endlessly. Thus there is no need for someone to type the leaflet!”

**S** Excellent, Excellent Dad! What was the result?

**F** God had his mercy on the Officer and guided him to the right path and he helped to set free the Muslim activists.

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