

第一章

生命的意义

CHAPTER 1

WHAT IS LIFE?



Man asks questions. A person can have all the creature comforts met, and yet find himself disturbed by the larger questions of life: Who am I? What am I here for? Where did I come from, and what is my ultimate destiny?

These are not just academic issues. A lot hinges on your answers to these questions—how you choose to live, what you value, and what purposes drive you.

NATURE OF MAN

At the core of the question of life is the issue of the nature of man. Am I a complex biological machine and no more, or am I a spiritual being with a soul? Richard Dawkins, an atheist writer, has said, “We are survival machines—robot vehicles blindly programmed to preserve the selfish molecules known as genes.”¹

“ “We are survival machines.”

– Richard Dawkins

That is one possible answer, and maybe the only possible answer if we are not permitted to look beyond nature for our answers.

人生多问。一个人可以衣食无忧，却依然为人生更大的问题所困扰：我是谁？我在这里做什么？我从哪里来？我的人生目的是什么？

这些不仅仅是学术问题。因为这些问题的答案会深深影响你的人生观、价值观以及对人生意义的追求。

人的本质

探讨人生的问题离不开讨论人性的本质。我仅仅是一个复杂的生物机器，还是一个有灵魂、有灵性的生命？知名的无神论作家理查德·道金斯曾说：“我们只是生存机器而已。我们是盲目按程序运行的机器人，用来保存叫做基因的自私分子。”

“ “我们只是生存机器而已。”

– 理查德·道金斯

这个答案可能是正确的——如果不允许超越大自然寻找答案，那么这个回答可能也就是唯一的答案。

Atheist Bertrand Russell bluntly enumerates the ramifications:

That Man is the product of causes which had no prevision of the end they were achieving; that his origin, his growth, his hopes and fears, his loves and his beliefs, are but the outcome of accidental collocations of atoms; that no fire, no heroism, no intensity of thought and feeling, can preserve an individual life beyond the grave; that all the labours of the ages, all the devotion, all the inspiration, all the noonday brightness of human genius, are destined to extinction in the vast death of the solar system, and that the whole temple of Man's achievement must inevitably be buried beneath the debris of a universe in ruins [...] Only within the scaffolding of these truths, only on the firm foundation of unyielding despair can the soul's habitation be safely built.²

– Bertrand Russell, *The Free Man's Worship*

What is Russell's conclusion about the meaning of life? If we are indeed just "accidental collocations of atoms," do you agree with his conclusion? Why and why not?

无神论者伯特兰·罗素直截了当地声明了这种观念的涵义：

人虽有智，却无法预知未来。人是自然演化的产物，无法预知未来。人的起源、生长、希望、恐惧、爱及信仰，不过是原子意外组合的结果。激情主义、英雄主义、强烈的情感等等都无法延续人的生命；终身操劳、竭尽生智、光照日月的天分都会随着太阳系的灭绝随风而去：人类所有的成就都将随宇宙的摧毁而灭亡……只有在这些真理的架构里，只有在无限绝望的坚实基础之上，人灵魂的栖息地才能被安全地建立。

– 伯特兰·罗素 《自由人的信仰》

罗素对生命意义的结论是什么？如果我们确实仅仅是“原子意外组合”，那么你同意他由此得出的结论吗？为什么？

The view espoused by Dawkins and Russell (and generally embraced in our world), also known as “**naturalism**,” says that all of reality is composed of the physical. This view is also called “**scientism**” because it tends to claim truths for science that are not themselves verifiable by science. If all of reality is physical, then it follows that we are no more than animated flesh. Any sense of self we may have that transcends our bodies is illusory. Quite literally, “we” are just our bodies, according to naturalism. Is this right?

Here’s a story from the Bible in which a man finds himself suddenly very wealthy. His approach to life turns out to be very “modern.”



Luke 12:15-20 (ESV)

¹⁵ And he said to them, “Take care, and be on your guard against all covetousness, for one’s life does not consist in the abundance of his possessions.” ¹⁶ And he told them a parable, saying, “The land of a rich man produced plentifully, ¹⁷ and he thought to himself, ‘What shall I do, for I have nowhere to store my crops?’ ¹⁸ And he said, ‘I will do this: I will tear down my barns and build larger ones, and there I will store all my grain and my goods.’ ¹⁹ And I will say to my soul, ‘Soul, you have ample goods laid up for many years; relax, eat, drink, be merry.’” ²⁰ But God said to him, ‘Fool! This night your soul is required of you, and the things you have prepared, whose will they be?’

What is this man’s “anthropology,” i.e., his view of the nature of man?

道金斯和罗素所持观点(也被世人所接受)又被称为“**自然论**”，其主旨便是世上之物皆由物质组成。这种看法也称为“**科学论**”，因为它往往会用科学来声张科学本身无法验证的真理。如果世上之物都由物质组成，由此推论，我们仅是一团会动的肉体罢了。那么一切超越肉体的自我意识便都是幻想。根据自然论，“我们”就只有肉体，这是真的吗？

《圣经》里有一个故事，说的是某人突然变得很富有。他对生命的看法其实相当“现代化”。

路加福音 12:15–20 (新译本)

¹⁵ 于是他对众人说：“你们要谨慎，远离一切贪心，因为人的生命并不在于家道丰富。” ¹⁶ 就对他们讲了一个比喻，说：“有一个富翁的田地丰收。 ¹⁷ 他自己心里说：‘怎么办呢？因为我没有足够的地方收藏出产了！’ ¹⁸ 又说：‘我要这样办：我要拆掉这些仓房，建造更大的，好在那里收藏我的一切粮食和货物。 ¹⁹ 然后，我要对我的灵魂说：灵魂啊，你拥有许多好东西，足够多年享用，只管安安逸逸地吃喝快乐吧！’ ²⁰ 神却对他说：‘无知的人哪，今天晚上，你的灵魂必被取去，你所预备的要归给谁呢？’

这个人有着怎样的“人类学”，也就是，他对人性的看法是什么？

What would be this man's life philosophy?

这个人的生活哲学是什么？

What did this man fail to consider?

这个人的思考中缺失了什么？

If we are not *just* our bodies, if we are *more* than our bodies, then what is this "more"?

肉体之外，如果我们还有“更多的东西”，那这个“更多的东西”是什么？

Given that the rich man in the story thought his “soul” fed on “grain” (v.19), maybe the highest good we can find for man is to feed the appetites, to minimize pain and maximize pleasure. So, is the notion that life is supposed to be about more, that we are more than our bodies, that there are real, transcendent values beyond satisfying our appetites—is this notion just unreal fluff? It must be, if who we are is just bodies. But Jesus, the one who told this story, says that “one’s life does not consist in the abundance of his possessions.” If not possessions, then what is life about? Academic degrees? Pleasures?

Like Shakespeare’s Macbeth, some throw their hands up and say life makes no sense, that

上述故事里的富翁认为他的“灵魂”应该饱足于“食物”上（19节），或许人生最大乐趣莫过于大吃大喝、痛苦最少、快乐最多。那么，肉身之外还有更多，满足食欲之上更有真实、超然的价值，难道这种想法不切实际吗？的确，如果我们仅有肉身，那么身外的东西自然都是幻觉。但讲此故事的耶稣说：“人的生命并不在于家道丰富。”如果不在物质的丰富，那生命在于什么呢？学术成就？吃喝玩乐？

就如莎士比亚的《马克白》里写到，有些人高举双手宣称生命毫无意义：

“life is a tale told by an idiot, full of sound and fury, signifying nothing.”

“生命不过是痴人说梦，充满了喧嚣和愤怒，没有任何意义。”

Or, as Danish philosopher Kierkegaard put it, is it the case that man is like a smooth stone thrown across the surface of a river—“it bounces along, until, like life itself, it loses momentum and sinks

又或如丹麦的哲学家克尔凯郭尔把生命比喻成打水漂的光滑石头：“它在水面弹着，如人生一般，直到失去动力而沉到水里化为虚有。”换句话说，



into nothingness.” In other words, since we all die anyway, no matter what we try to construct out of our short lives, what meaning can we find? “Let us eat and drink, for tomorrow we die,” as the saying goes.^a

Obviously, this is an absurd view of man. Yet, better answers seem hard to find under an atheistic, naturalistic worldview. This difficulty, however, is entirely arbitrary, imposed on modernity by the irrational claim that there is no truth other than scientific truth, and there is therefore nothing real other than what science can detect (i.e., atoms).^b

In addition to being a bleak view that strips life of all its color, this view makes a huge claim that is simply asserted without evidence. Naturalism stifles deeper thinking in that it artificially reduces what we are allowed to consider in answering the most fundamental of questions.

For a grander perspective that gives place to human nature, worth, and meaning find their place—we need to start with the question of origin. In other words, where did we come from? Again the naturalist here is forced to paint with only one color: we did not come from anywhere. Matter is all there is. However, even the most ardent naturalist is forced to admit that this itself is an unverifiable claim that is simply asserted as a matter of dogma.

既然我们都会死，那么无论怎么活出我们短暂的生命都无用，又何须寻找生命的意义呢？常言道：“人生苦短，及时享乐。”^a

显然，这种看待人类的观点很荒唐。但是，在无神、纯自然的世界观里，又很难找到更好的答案。这种观点其实非常的武断，声称科学真理以外便无真理，并将这个不理性的观点强加于现今社会。比如原子可以用科学方法被侦测，其他科学方法侦测不到的就不真实。^b

这种暗淡的观点不仅剥夺了生命中所有的色彩，它更在毫无凭据的基础上建立了一个巨大的主张。自然论阻止了深层的思考，它在我们回答人生最基本的问题上限制了我们的思维。

从宏观角度来看，若要探寻人性的本质、价值及其意义，就要从人类的起源开始。换句话说，在回答我们从哪里来的问题时，自然论者只有单一的答案：我们不从哪里来，物质就是一切。然而，即使是最狂热的自然论者也不得不承认这种观点无法被证实，它仅是一个被强加的信条而已。

a. 1 Cor 15:32 “What do I gain if, humanly speaking, I fought with beasts at Ephesus? If the dead are not raised, ‘Let us eat and drink, for tomorrow we die.’” This is the life philosophy the Bible sees as appropriate if we are no more than bodies destined to perish.

b. It has been pointed out by philosophers, atheistic and religious alike, that this widely-held view is itself not a scientific statement, and therefore self-defeating. Like the sentence, “There are no sentences in English longer than 5 words,” the statement that there are no truths apart from scientific truths, being a nonscientific statement, cannot be true on its own terms. It collapses logically, and is, essentially, meaningless nonsense.

a. 哥林多前书15:32，“我在以弗所和野兽搏斗，如果照着人的意思来看，那对有什么益处呢？如果死人不会复活，‘我们就吃吃喝喝吧，因为我们明天就要死了。’”如果我们只不过是注定要灭亡的肉体，那么这就是《圣经》认为恰当的生活哲学。

b. 哲学家，无神论者和宗教学者都指出，这种广泛持有的观点本身并不是一个科学性的陈述，所以是自相矛盾的。就像这句话一样：“英语中没有超过5个单词的句子。”这是一句没有科学根据的说法，这句话本身也不能单独成立。它在逻辑上不成立，实质上更是毫无意义的废话。

For more on this, and on the larger issue of the existence of a creator and the origin of the universe, please read the article at the end of this week's material: **Appendix A: The Reason for God.**

If we have been created by God, it would follow that our attempt to locate ourselves apart from the larger story of creation is bound to be unfruitful. Further, if God, himself a spiritual being, made us to be more than our bodies, then it follows that we would have such a thing as "spiritual longings" which no amount of food or pleasures can satisfy.

The Bible goes on to identify the reason for this longing: God has "put eternity into man's heart" (Ecclesiastes 3:11). In other words, the Bible claims that we can never be fully at peace with only the physical because we have been created by God with eternal souls, which long for something much more than a mere biological existence. C.S. Lewis describes an "inconsolable longing" which has characterized the human condition across cultures:

I find in me a desire which no experience in this world can satisfy, the most probable explanation of which is that I was made for another world. If none of my earthly pleasures satisfy it, that does not prove that the universe is a fraud. Probably earthly pleasures were never meant to satisfy it, but only to arouse it, to suggest the real thing.³

— C.S. Lewis, *Mere Christianity*

关于创造者是否存在及宇宙起源的探讨内容, 请阅读这周教材的后续文章: **附录A: 《为何是他》。**

如果我们是神创造的, 那么以创世记的故事之外来定位自己必定是毫无结果的。此外, 如果神有灵性, 那么他在创造我们肉体的同时, 也会附上“灵魂的饥渴”, 而这种渴望无法用食物或享乐来满足。

《圣经》告诉我们, 神把“永恒的意识放在人的心里”(传道书3:11)。换句话说,《圣经》宣称我们永远不能从这世界中短暂的成就里得到充分的满足, 因为我们是被神创造的, 有永恒的灵魂, 向往着一种远远超越单纯存活的精神。C·S·路易斯把这种跨越不同文化的感觉称之为“无法满足的渴望”:

要是我们有一种欲望, 这世上的万事万物都不能满足, 最适当的解释是, 我是为另一个世界而造的。要是世界上的乐趣满足不到我们, 并不等于说这个宇宙只是个假象。很可能这世上的一切乐趣并非为满足此盼望而有, 而只是来唤醒它的, 从而来告诉我们某一处有真正能够满足我们的东西。

— C·S·路易斯 《返璞归真》

THE CREATION ACCOUNT IN GENESIS

So let's dive into the question of origin.

Many seekers looking into Christianity often get

创世记之创世篇

从起源的问题开始。

许多基督教慕道者往往卡在《圣经》的前几页而读

stuck in the first few pages of the Bible because of a crucial misreading of the Genesis creation account.

Imagine a person, upon reading a chemistry lab manual, exclaiming in exasperation, “This book has no plot!” Such a person is misunderstanding the genre of what he is reading. A lab manual is not interested in character or plot development. It is only meant to describe how to run experiments. Therefore, it would be absurd to demand from a lab manual answers it is simply not interested in providing.

Many read the creation account in Genesis as one would read a lab manual and demand from it answers that the book of Genesis is not interested in providing. Genesis is not concerned with the question of “how” but with the theological narrative of God’s creation with a focus on the questions “why” and “who”—i.e., why is there something rather than nothing? Who created this universe? Who is man, and what is his relationship to the Creator?

IN THE BEGINNING

Let’s read Genesis 1.

Genesis 1 (ESV)

¹ In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth. ² The earth was without form and void, and darkness was over the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God was hovering over the face of the waters.

³ And God said, “Let there be light,” and there was light. ⁴ And God saw that the light was good. And God separated the light from the darkness. ⁵ God called the light Day, and the darkness he called Night. And there was evening and there was morning, the first day.

不下去，就是因为他们对创世记产生了误解。

假如某人读完一本化学实验手册，然后大声抱怨说：“这本书太烂了，一点故事情节都没有！”那只能说他们误解了这本手册的原意。实验手册只解释实验过程，并不讲述人物或描写故事情节。想从实验手册中看人讲故事实在是强人所难。

许多人读创世记也跟看实验手册一样，总想从中寻找本不存在的答案。创世记不关心“如何”的问题，而只专注于回答“为什么”和“谁”相关的神学问题。比如，宇宙为什么是真实存在的而不是虚无的？谁创造了宇宙？人是谁，他与创造者的关系是什么？

太始之初

让我们来读创世记第一章。



创世记 1 (新译本)

¹ 起初，神创造天地。² 地是空虚混沌；深渊上一片黑暗；神的灵运行在水面上。

³ 神说：“要有光！”就有了光。⁴ 神看光是好的，他就把光暗分开了。⁵ 神称光为昼，称暗为夜。有晚上，有早晨；这是第一日。

⁶ And God said, “Let there be an expanse in the midst of the waters, and let it separate the waters from the waters.” ⁷ And God made the expanse and separated the waters that were under the expanse from the waters that were above the expanse. And it was so. ⁸ And God called the expanse Heaven. And there was evening and there was morning, the second day.

⁹ And God said, “Let the waters under the heavens be gathered together into one place, and let the dry land appear.” And it was so. ¹⁰ God called the dry land Earth, and the waters that were gathered together he called Seas. And God saw that it was good.

¹¹ And God said, “Let the earth sprout vegetation, plants yielding seed, and fruit trees bearing fruit in which is their seed, each according to its kind, on the earth.” And it was so. ¹² The earth brought forth vegetation, plants yielding seed according to their own kinds, and trees bearing fruit in which is their seed, each according to its kind. And God saw that it was good. ¹³ And there was evening and there was morning, the third day.

¹⁴ And God said, “Let there be lights in the expanse of the heavens to separate the day from the night. And let them be for signs and for seasons, and for days and years, ¹⁵ and let them be lights in the expanse of the heavens to give light upon the earth.” And it was so. ¹⁶ And God made the two great lights—the greater light to rule the day and the lesser light to rule the night—and the stars. ¹⁷ And God set them in the expanse of the heavens to give light on the earth, ¹⁸ to rule over the day and over the night, and to separate the light from the darkness. And God saw that it was good. ¹⁹ And there was evening and there was morning, the fourth day.

²⁰ And God said, “Let the waters swarm with swarms of living creatures, and let birds fly above the earth across the expanse of the heavens.” ²¹ So God created the great sea creatures and every living creature that moves, with which the waters swarm, according to their kinds, and every winged bird according to its

⁶神说：“众水之间要有穹苍，把水和水分开！”事就这样成了。⁷神造了穹苍，把穹苍以下的水和穹苍以上的水分开了。⁸神称穹苍为天。有晚上，有早晨；这是第二日。

⁹神说：“天下的水要聚在一处，使旱地露出来！”事就这样成了。¹⁰神称旱地为地，称水的聚处为海。神看这是好的。

¹¹神说：“地上要长出青草、结种子的蔬菜和结果子的树木，各从其类，在地上的果子都包着核！”事就这样成了。¹²于是，地上长出了青草和结种子的蔬菜，各从其类；又长出结果子的树木，各从其类，果子都包着核。神看这是好的。

¹³有晚上，有早晨；这是第三日。

¹⁴神说：“在天上穹苍中，要有光体来分昼夜；这些光体要作为记号，定节令、日子和年岁；¹⁵它们要在天上穹苍中发光，照耀地上！”事就这样成了。¹⁶于是，神造了两个大光体，大的管昼，小的管夜；又造了星星。¹⁷神把这些光体安放在天上穹苍中，照耀地上，¹⁸管昼夜，分光暗。神看这是好的。¹⁹有晚上，有早晨；这是第四日。

²⁰神说：“水要滋长生物；地上和天空之中，要有雀鸟飞翔！”²¹于是，神创造了大鱼和在水中滋生各种能活动的生物，各从其类；又创造了各种有翅膀的飞鸟，各从其类。神看这是好的。²²神就赐福给牠们，说：“要繁衍增多，充满海

kind. And God saw that it was good.²² And God blessed them, saying, “Be fruitful and multiply and fill the waters in the seas, and let birds multiply on the earth.”²³ And there was evening and there was morning, the fifth day.

²⁴ And God said, “Let the earth bring forth living creatures according to their kinds—livestock and creeping things and beasts of the earth according to their kinds.” And it was so.²⁵ And God made the beasts of the earth according to their kinds and the livestock according to their kinds, and everything that creeps on the ground according to its kind. And God saw that it was good.

²⁶ Then God said, “Let us make man in our image, after our likeness. And let them have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over the livestock and over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth.”

²⁷ So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them.

²⁸ And God blessed them. And God said to them, “Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth and subdue it, and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over every living thing that moves on the earth.”²⁹ And God said, “Behold, I have given you every plant yielding seed that is on the face of all the earth, and every tree with seed in its fruit. You shall have them for food.”³⁰ And to every beast of the earth and to every bird of the heavens and to everything that creeps on the earth, everything that has the breath of life, I have given every green plant for food.” And it was so.³¹ And God saw everything that he had made, and behold, it was very good. And there was evening and there was morning, the sixth day.

Note that the Bible does not attempt to persuade the reader of the existence of God. Rather, from its very first pages, the

洋；雀鸟也要在地上增多！”²³ 有晚上，有早晨；这是第五日。

²⁴ 神说：“地上要生出活物来，各从其类；牲畜、爬行的动物和地上的野兽，各从其类！”事就这样成了。²⁵ 于是，神造了地上的野兽，各从其类；牲畜，各从其类；地上各种爬行的动物，各从其类。神看这是好的。

²⁶ 神说：“我们要照着我们的形象，按着我们的样式造人；使他们管理海里的鱼、空中的鸟、地上的牲畜，以及全地，和地上所有爬行的生物！”

²⁷ 于是，神照着自己的形象创造人；就是照着神的形象创造了他；他所创造的有男有女。

²⁸ 神就赐福给他们，对他们说：“要繁衍增多，充满这地，征服它；也要管理海里的鱼、空中的鸟和地上所有走动的生物。”²⁹ 神说：“看哪！我把全地上结种子的各样蔬菜，和一切果树上有种子的果子，都赐给你们作食物。”³⁰ 至于地上的各种野兽，空中的各种飞鸟，和地上爬行有生命的各种活物，我把一切青草蔬菜赐给牠们作食物。”事就这样成了。³¹ 神看他所造的一切都很好。有晚上，有早晨；这是第六日。

请注意《圣经》没有刻意说服读者神的存在。从书的开始章节，《圣经》就宣称了神的活动。我们把关于宇宙起源的辩论放到一边（在附录A里有具体

Bible declares the activity of God. All of the arguments regarding the origin of the universe aside (covered in Appendix A), the Bible simply states that everything has its being in the sovereign creation of God.

细节),《圣经》清楚明白地说明了万物是在神的主导下被创造出来的。

What repeated statement describes God's assessment after each phase of creation? What is God's final assessment of the created order after he places mankind within the rest of his creation? (Genesis 1:31)

哪一个重复的句子表达了神在每个造物阶段完成后的评价? 神创造了人类之后, 他最后的评价又是什么(创世记1:31)?

List the ways in which the creation of man differed from the creation of the rest of the universe? (Genesis 1:26-31)

请举例说明神造人和造万物过程中的不同之处(创世记 1:26-31)。

What do you think it means for man to be made "in God's image"?

你认为“以神的形象造人”对人有什么意义?

Genesis 2:7-8 provides a bit more detail: “then LORD God formed the man from the dust of the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and the man became a living creature. And the LORD God had planted a garden in Eden, in the east; and there he put the man whom he had formed.”

A special Hebrew verb is used in the creation account when God creates man. We see God taking a pause, almost taking a deep breath, deliberating, and “forming” man. We read that the other animals were created “according to their kinds” but the Bible declares that “God created man in his own image” and that God “breathed...the breath of life” into us, highlighting the special relationship between mankind and God. According to the Bible, part of the reason for this special relationship is that we are spiritual, and not merely physical, creatures.

Christianity asserts that every individual human being is going to live forever, and this must be either true or false. Now there are a good many things which would not be worth bothering about if I were going to live only seventy years, but which I had better bother about very seriously if I am going to live forever...If individuals live only seventy years, then a state, or a nation, or a civilization, which may last for a thousand years, is more important than an individual. But if Christianity is true, then the individual is not only more important but incomparably more important, for he is everlasting and the life of a state or a civilization, compared with his, is only a moment.⁴

– C.S. Lewis, *Mere Christianity*

创世记2:7-8描述了更多的细节：“耶和华神用地上的尘土造成人形，把生气吹进他的鼻孔里，那人就成了有生命的活人。耶和华神在东方的伊甸，栽了一个园子，把他所造的人放在那里。”

《圣经》用了一个很特殊的希伯来语动词来描述神造人的过程。我们仿佛看见神停顿了一下，做了个深呼吸，深思熟虑地把人造出来。其他的动物都是按照动物本身的模样创造的，“各从其类”，而《圣经》说“神照着自己的形象创造人”，以及神“把生气吹进”我们的身体。这说明人与神的关系非常特别。按《圣经》的说法，这个特别的关系意味着我们不仅有肉体，还有灵性。

基督教信仰认为，每个人都会永存下去。这是一个可以是真也可以是假的陈述。要是一个人最多只能活到七十岁，有许多事根本不用去担心。要是一个人会永远活下去，却不得不留意一些本来可以不理的事……要是一个人只活七十岁，而一个国家，一个民族，或一种文明却可以活一千年，后者当然比个人重要。如果基督信仰是真的，个人可以永活，那么，个人不止比其他的更重要，而且重要得难以比拟。又因为他永存，国家或文明的寿命和他相比，只不过顷刻。

– C·S·路易斯 《返璞归真》

What can you conclude about God's intention and heart for mankind through the Genesis account?

按照创世记的描述,你认为神创造人的心意及意图是什么?

ANTICIPATING PARENT

Genesis reports that God repeatedly declares creation as good, and finally, with man in place, "very good." What is the basis of this "goodness"?

Parents expecting the arrival of a newborn don't get caught off guard. Before the arrival of the baby, they set up the room. They decorate it with pastel baby colors and line the walls with pictures of trains and clouds. They assemble a crib and pad it with cushion. At each stage, you can imagine the parents stepping back, looking at what they prepared and saying, "This is good."

There are many different perceptions about God: an aloof figure sitting at a distance, a powerful and vindictive force that should be avoided, perhaps an irrelevant and senile grandfather.



满怀期待的父母

创世记提到,神每造一物都会说“好”,最后把人造出来时,甚至还说“非常好。”这个“好”的依据是什么?

等待小宝宝降生的父母亲一般不会措手不及。宝宝降生之前,他们会准备一些东西。比如把房间装饰

成柔和的颜色,在墙上画上火车和云朵。装上婴儿床,并放好软垫。你能想象到,每做完一件事,这对父母亲都会后退一步,看着他们准备好了的东西,说:“这个好。”

神在众生心中有诸多不同的形象:孤傲且不近人情的神;强势且不怒自威的神;或者老迈又神志不清的老爷爷。

Contrary to such views, the portrait of God as revealed in the very first pages of the Bible is that of a loving Father, who places man into an environment prepared for him. God “blesses” and “gives” and pronounces that creation is “very good.”

The majestic mountains, the pristine beauty of the meadows, the rivers, the trees, were all prepared for mankind, who uniquely among creatures is endowed with the strange propensity to find nature transcendently beautiful.

Man was the crown of all of God’s creation, sharing His nature, and meant to rule over it with love and wisdom. This is the message of Genesis.

A FORK IN THE ROAD

Let’s consider once again the question we started with: “What is life?” The answer to that question is integrally linked with the question about God. As William Lane Craig puts it:

Without God the universe is the result of a cosmic accident, a chance explosion. There is no reason for which it exists. As for man, he is a freak of nature – a blind product of matter plus time plus chance. Man is just a lump of slime that evolved into rationality. There is no more purpose in life for the human race than for a species of insect; for both are the result of the blind interaction of chance and necessity.⁵

– William Lane Craig, *Reasonable Faith*

Such notions are disheartening. However, if it really is the case that there is no God, then we ought to be clear about the consequences and accept them, which would mean we reject

恰恰相反,《圣经》从第一页起所描述的神与上面这些形象完全不同。神是一位慈爱的父亲,把所造的人放在预先准备好的环境里面,并“保佑人们”,还“赐福予人”,还说他所造的“非常好!”

雄伟的高山,广袤的原野,奔腾的河流,葱郁的树木,已经预先准备好以迎接人类,而人类又是唯一能够欣赏大自然美景的生物。

神造万物,人为王冠。人类分享着神的本性,被赋予了用爱和智慧来管理这个世界的职务。这是创世记所表达的信息。

人生的十字路口

回到本课程开头提出的问题:“生命是什么?”这个问题的答案与神息息相关。正如哲学家威廉·莱恩·克雷格所说的:

没有神的宇宙会是大爆炸的一个意外结果,没有存在的任何理由。人类也只不过是大自然的意外产物,在某种机会下,由特定物质在特定时间盲目的组合而成,在进化中演变成了具有某种理性的动物。人类与昆虫的生命意义别无二致,二者都是盲目地从偶然性和必然性相互作用而演变出来的结果。

– 威廉·莱恩·克雷格 《合理的信心》

这种结论令人沮丧。但是,如果神不存在,我们就该理解并接受这个结论所带来的后果。这个后果就是拒绝一切价值、意义、甚至爱的概念,并接受

notions of value and meaning and align our lives in accordance with the belief that life is ultimately meaningless.

On the other hand, if the Bible is true in its claim that the God who created us is a loving heavenly Father, that means we are more than mere molecules. We are more than our bodies. It means that our longing for something higher is not a futile desire, but that it arises out of the very core of who we are as transcendent beings.

The weight of the evidence is on the latter. While some people think there must be some kind of “leap in the dark” involved, the actual state of the evidence to help you assess the truth value of the Christian claim is actually quite good. This course aims to lay out the foundations of Christianity. Whether you’re a believer or just seeking answers, let’s consider together the claims of the Christian gospel through the next few weeks.

我们的生命就是毫无意义。

但是, 如果《圣经》所说是真的, 创造了万物的神是一个慈爱的天父, 那我们就不单纯是一群分子堆积物, 我们拥有的远比肉体更多。我们追求比生命更高的渴望不会徒劳, 因为这本就是源自于我们超越自然的本质。

后者是有证据的。虽然某些人认为基督信仰是种“盲目的信仰”, 但现实情况是有很多证据可以帮助你认识基督教所宣扬真理的可信性。本课程的目的就是介绍基督教的信仰根基。不论你是信徒还是探求者, 在接下来的几个星期, 让我们一起来探讨基督福音。



ENDNOTES / 尾注

- 1 Dawkins, Richard. *The Selfish Gene*, 3rd ed. s.l. : Oxford University Press, 2006.
- 2 Russell, Bertrand. “The Free Man’s Worship.” s.n. : 1903w.
- 3 Lewis, C.S. *Mere Christianity*. New York: Harper Press, 2001.
- 4 Ibid.
- 5 Craig, William Lane. *Reasonable Faith*. Wheaton: Crossway Books, 1994.