**3.**

*This most elegant system of the sun, planets, and comets could not have arisen without the design and dominion of an intelligent and powerful being.* - Isaac Newton

Isaac Newton presents with this quote one of the most widely used, if not *the* most widely used, argument for a power higher than ourselves, an all-mighty god. By looking at the world around us, and perhaps more specifically the universe outside our own planet, the only plausible explanation for the mind-blowing scenery of stars, galaxies and planets is, according to Newton, that an *intelligent* force carefully has designed said scenery. Newton is very certain in his assessment, saying that our world *could not* have been raised by anything else. But how bullet-proof is this idea? Is it truly so undeniably true as Newton puts it?

The idea of an intelligent creator is not something Newton invented. Among the theologian Thomas Aquinas’ rational arguments for God’s existence, is the statement that as everything in this world seemingly has a purpose, it could not have “appeared” randomly. After all, the rabbit’s sideways-oriented eyes help it watch out for predators. The bees serve an essential role in ensuring the growth of all living organisms. Our own internal system of organs is filled with complex and advanced mechanisms that make sure our body functions properly and is protected from fatal diseases. How could all these carefully tuned creations have come to be without some all-mighty god spending time at the drawing board?

The most accepted answer to that question, is of course Charles Darwin’s theory of evolution. The species roaming this earth have not always been this way; fierce competition has resulted in that only the ones best suited for survival *have* survived. Millions of years of surviving genes being passed on, coupled with a fair share of mutations and coincidences, have brought us this seemingly designed Earth.

Newton was not talking about the Earth in his quote, though. His assertion concerned the universe outside our atmosphere. But the problem with assuming that an intelligent creator has designed the physical world, is that it requires one to be able to reason for *everything* about the universe. If God created it, surely everything in it would serve a purpose? The question then arises: why does our solar system contain as much as eight planets, of which only one is habitable? Why would an intelligent god leave planets with nothing more than rocks and gas floating in the universe, but still assign them such elegant orbits around a gigantic source of energy? The universe is either not as elegant as Newton puts it, or even the planets of Saturn or Neptune serve a role in God’s grand plan. Either way, the intelligent creator argument becomes problematic once one looks past the selected, beautiful phenomenona of the universe.

Then, you may ask, what *would* be capable of creating a universe where everything in the end functions in a vast system that keeps going for billions of years? Even here, Darwin’s evolution theory might be apt answer. If the world has to be created by *something*, does that necessarily assume something *intelligent*? Imagine a mechanism that regularly spews out entire universes, “big bangs”, without any apparent intelligence or purpose behind it; a universe lottery. From such a mechanism, surely not every result would be able to function as our universe does, thus collapsing or not being able to foster intelligent life. The ones that do, however, keep existing for billions of years, perhaps forever, and becomes a source of habitable spaces. In other words, the universes suited for survival, do. This would explain why our universe often seems to finely tuned: it does because it *has to*. Otherwise, it would not have survived for such a long time, and we would not be able to observe it.

Of course, there is no definitive evidence of such a mechanism, at least not in this essay. However, Newton’s statement that our universe “could not have arisen without the design and dominion of and intelligent and powerful being” does not hold water. Assuming a non-thinking, automatic mechanism is after all as plausible as assuming an intelligent creator. Further, the explanation involving an intelligent designer does not leave room for the “dead ends” of the universe, such as most of the planets in our solar system, or our own dead end: the tail bone. The bottom line is that assuming an intelligent being beyond our own world, raises only *more* questions. Why are certain parts of the universe so elegant and seemingly planned, while others not so much? Alternatively, can one truly reason for *everything* the universe is made up of, let alone God’s *motivation* for even creating this universe in the first place? In the words of Occam’s razor, the explanation requiring fewest additional explanations is most likely the correct one. And even though an intelligent creator at first glance perhaps can seem like the most simple and plausible explanation, the alternative might be even simpler.