

## God and The Soul

### SHERLOCK HOLMES

Excerpt from *The Memoirs of Sherlock Holmes* by Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, 1893:

**HE WALKED** past the couch to the open window, and held up the drooping stalk of a moss rose, looking down at the dainty blend of crimson and green. It was a new phase of his character to me, for I had never before seen him show any keen interest in natural objects.

"There is nothing in which deduction is so necessary as in religion," said he, leaning with his back against the shutters. "It can be built up as an exact science by the reasoner. Our highest assurance of the goodness of Providence seems to me to rest in flowers. All other things, our powers, our desires, our food, are really necessary for our existence in the first instance. But this rose is an extra. Its smell and its colour are an embellishment of life, not a condition of it. It is only goodness which gives extras, and so I say again that we have much to hope from the flowers."

NOTE: A detective's testimony is singularly appropriate. Yes, he is a fictional detective, but his author was a real doctor. Dr Conan Doyle did a 'transfer of training', from diagnosing diseases by their symptoms, to his detective diagnosing crime from clues. Like a lawyer, a detective deals not only with crime, but in *clarifying* things. Good apologetics can take nature as a puzzle to be solved, and the solution is the Great Benefactor, the Creator, Who has left us lots of clues.

### THE FARMER AS PHILOSOPHER

from *Green Mountains* by Bernard O'Reilly, 1940.

**MANY SO-CALLED THINKERS** seem to have a wrong impression of the settled religious thinking which usually goes hand in hand with rural occupations.

If a professor sees in his looking glass a strong argument in favour of a Simian [= ape like] ancestry, the man on the land will possibly be interested in it, but only as a theory; all his life he has been battling with hard facts, not abstract thoughts and he knows what will happen to his land and how soon the bailiff will be in, if he starts running his farm along lines of unsubstantiated theory. His very life and work have given him a true perspective of the value of theories as such.

Generations of the land give men a settled outlook which is frequently mistaken for stodginess or stupidity by erratic thinkers, who follow the wavering trends of any new writer who happens to be fashionable for the moment.

A farmer's life is conducive to clear, simple thinking which is unclouded by restless speculation. He sees in his everyday life the germination of seed, the opening of a rose-bud, the birth of little calves and long-legged foals and he knows that all the greatest scientists of the generation and the hundreds of millions of pounds expended in research have not been able to reproduce, artificially, the simplest of these daily miracles.

He knows that the humblest of his farm machines did not build itself nor can it run by itself, so by cold irrefutable logic he does not expect that the mighty machinery of the universe and that vast complicated system which we call Nature, either built themselves or run themselves.

There must have been a Builder and a General Manager whom we call God.

### ALBERT EINSTEIN

**THE MOST** incomprehensible thing about this world is that it is comprehensible. 1955.

### THE NAUTICAL ALMANAC

**THERE IS** a book called the Nautical Almanac which is full of columns and columns of numbers. A new edition is issued every year. It costs about \$60. It is set out as a calendar, with a double-page spread for every three days, with the date of the month and the day of the week shown for every day.

**It lists the exact position of the sun, moon, four planets and a couple of hundred stars.** Their position is given in terms of the latitude and longitude of the place on the earth which is exactly under the particular heavenly body. The latitude is given in four figures: the first two for the number of degrees north or south of the equator, and next two for the number of minutes, each minute being 1/60 of a degree. The longitude is given as three figures for the number of degrees west of Greenwich, and two for the minutes.

Because the earth is rotating on its axis, one turn in every 24 hours, and because it is whizzing through space in its elliptic orbit around the sun, one lap in every 365¼ days, the position of the sun, moon, four planets and 200 stars is changing all the time.

So the almanac gives their position for every day, for every hour, for every minute, for every second, of the whole year. What a book! What precision!

There are now freeware computer programmes containing its information for years in advance. From its data, it is possible, with the help of a sextant, and a chronometer set to Greenwich Mean Time, to calculate one's own latitude and longitude. Of course, with a GPS (Ground Position Satellite) is it now possible to read these off from a gadget the size of mobile phone.

**The existence of the Nautical Almanac proves there must be a God and that man must have a soul.**

Why? Because the solar system runs to such an accurate time-table that it is **predictable** months in advance.

A predictable time-table is only possible for an organized operation. Imagine air lines without organization, without predictability: they would be neither safe nor useful.

Therefore the solar system must be the product of a Supreme Intelligence and this is the Being we call God.

What is more, the predictions in the almanac prove to be accurate prophecies. Such is the power of man's intelligence. **Therefore man has a soul, a spirit.**

Why? Because a spirit is a being of power, a being with power to *understand*, the power to understand matter, indeed, to understand itself. A spirit is a being with power over matter, a being with power beyond matter. We call this spirit reality a soul.

Animals have lesser souls, and vegetative matter lower again. In studying them, we realize the vast difference between them and us.

## The Existence of God

Almighty and invisible

**SIMPLE APOLOGETICS** deals with God and us: "For whoever would draw near to God must **believe He exists and rewards those who fear Him.**" (Hebrews 11:6)

The existence of God can be known from human reason. A Catholic may not doubt this: it is binding on him by Vatican I. Thus Romans 1:19-20 says, "For what can be known about God is plain to them. Ever since the creation of the world His invisible nature, namely, His eternal power and deity [= God-ness], has been **clearly perceived in the things that have been made.** So they are without excuse." (cf. Wisdom 13.)

One way of proceeding is *ad hominem*, i.e. arguing "to the man", getting him to use his own principles to convince himself.

For example, "Do you believe in SETI [=Search for Extra Terrestrial Intelligence]?"

"Of course I do!" he affirms vehemently.

"How would you recognize it?" you ask.

"By de-coding their radio signals," he replies.

You ask him to explain. He says, "Because coded signals can only come from an intelligent being."

You say, "Well, there's coded intelligence in human genes and chromosomes. Where does it come from?"

"Evolution over millions of years," says he.

You retort: "So much for your SETI. If coded signals imply intelligence, so does coded information in living cells. The intelligent being who designed and made it all is called God."

**WONDER at the world** leads to both Religion and Science: Religion studies God, His plan, and our choices in life; Science studies the created things themselves.

- Think of an **untidy bedroom**: it **lacks ORDER**: it does not tidy itself — it lacks the power to do so.
- Tidiness and order come from a thinking mind: they need a plan, a **DESIGN** of how to arrange things (and, to carry it out, goodwill, plus power or hard work).
- In the world around us, from a human eye to a mousetrap, things work only if all the parts are there, and 'in order'.
- Such **IRREDUCIBLE COMPLEXITY** is not from chance but from a design in the thinking mind of a designer.
- World Design is not from a small-time designer like man: but a Big-time designer and maker Whom we name God.
- No one made God, the only being without a maker, the only independent Being, on whom all else depends.
- Here we are on planet earth, speeding & spinning in space: What are we here for? Religion offers answers...

## The Existence of the Soul

Spirit, not matter

**TO vindicate rewards after death** (implied by Hebrews 11:6, above), reason should first show that souls exist.

**I AM CONSCIOUS OF:**

- **my mental privacy**, and responsibility.
- **commanding my body**, like a driver of a car (or computer) — I am not just a body, I do have a soul.
- **my power to will good or evil**, to choose, (those who deny evil finally 'wake up' when they experience it); so I can judge, "I *should* do this", "You should not do that".
- **my power to understand**, not just to know:

I don't think *with* my brain, yet I cannot think *without* it (during my life on earth, it is like my personal computer); rather, I think with my **mind**, a power of my spiritual soul.

**BY CONTRAST:**

- Animals do not 'understand': they do not 'stand under'; they do not 'intellect' ('inter-lect' = choose/read between); they don't have minds, but brains pre-programmed by God.
- My soul is not made of chemicals but exists in a higher world; it is not made of parts, cannot be taken apart or re-cycled.

- Noble ideas and ideals like truth, justice and love, need a suitable 'container' to hold them, a non-material container:

"Do you know how things like water need a special sort of container like a bucket to hold them?"

"Yes, colanders and fishing nets won't do."

"Can our bodily brains be a container to hold abstract ideas like truth and justice, or for our noble ideals like beauty, goodness or love?"

"Of course. We think with our brains."

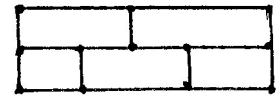
"No! You mean that we can't think without them. But a brain is only chemicals: it's like a computer, and just as mindless! **Non-material ideas and ideals need a non-material container.** That's what a mind is, a power of a non-material thing called a soul."

"But souls are unscientific."

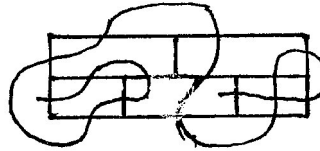
"Not so. **Souls do our scientific thinking!** They do all our thinking... Minds and souls are like drivers in motor cars, they drive the brain and body."

## The Power of Proof

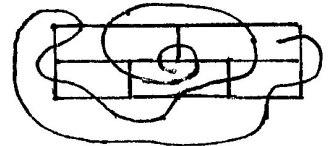
**TRY TO DRAW** one continuous line through each little short line of the puzzle, crossing it once and only once.



One line uncrossed ↓



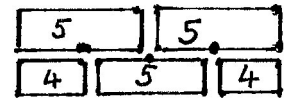
↓ One line crossed twice



The variety of human responses is fascinating. Some give up very easily and assert it impossible.. Others give up only after repeated failure and growing frustration. A few never give up: they assert, "Nothing is impossible" and "A computer could do it."

## PROOF OF IMPOSSIBILITY

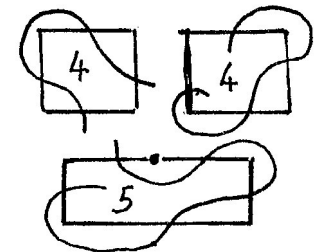
A continuous line which would cut each short line once and only once amounts to entering and exiting five multi-doored chambers several times over, in any order, until each door has been used once and only once.



There are **two chambers with four doors**, and **three chambers with five doors.**

A four-door chamber must have both ends of the line inside or neither end inside it, because 'entering and exiting' go in pairs.

By contrast, a five-door chamber must have one end of a line inside it, because 'entering and exiting' go in pairs, so there is always one door not paired.



But there are three five-doored chambers. So if there were a solution, there would have to be three ends to the line, one in each of these chambers.

But a line can only have two ends.

Therefore the problem is impossible.

Contrast the power of reasoning over the experimental approach. **Experiment might make one suspect the problem is impossible, but only reasoning can prove it.**

Reasoning from the evidence of nature convinces us there is an intelligent Creator and that we have souls.

Apologetics and morality are hampered today by a general lack of logic. Mastery of geometry, grammar and computers should help us with logic, proof and religious convictions