AS IN LITTLE THINGS...

Finding Answers to the Great Questions
of Life from Everyday Experiences

Oluwaseun Bayode

AS IN LITTLE THINGS. Finding Answers to the Great Questions of Life from Everyday Experiences.

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CHAPTER 2

Perfection Hidden in Plain Sight

What speaks to the soul escapes
our measurements.
— *Alexander von Humboldt*

The more we understand our natural surroundings or the Laws of Nature, the more miraculous it all seems. In my birth city of Lagos, Nigeria, where I spent most of my childhood, ants roaming around was a common sight. A single ant colony can consist of over twenty million ants. I have never known anyone to enjoy the company of ants, me included. They are usually a nuisance to us, and we are quick to declare their worthlessness by killing them. This attitude changes when we learn how they aerate the soil, improve soil chemistry, and disperse seeds to safer, more nutrient-rich habitats. Everything has a purpose that serves the whole, even a tiny ant.

An increasing awareness of the perfection behind the arrangement of all that surrounds us is an essential part of being alive.

Without it, we would continue to see ourselves as the center of the universe, thus putting ourselves at odds with the natural rhythm of the whole. We are simply creatures in Creation. Like the ants, we too have our role to play in supporting the natural rhythm of Creation. If we abandon the path prescribed for us by higher guidance, chaos and confusion will be the result.

A coarse representation of this is given in the following story about a traffic accident.

On her early morning jog, Adanna hears a loud crash on the road and finds herself a witness to a horrific car accident. A driver trying to beat the red light had sped up and lost control of the vehicle when he attempted to avoid

a car coming from the opposite direction. “Why didn’t he just wait!” she yells.

Traffic on the road slowed to a crawl as the state police and medical staff arrived at the scene. After providing her statement to the police, Adanna sadly walks home in reflection. The sight of the driver being ejected from his vehicle and lying in a pool of blood on the side of the road had disturbed her greatly. “Why didn’t he just wait?” she asks herself.

Ten miles back, Gerald sits in his white Tesla Model Y and is growing increasingly agitated by his lack of progress. *There is never any traffic on this road. What could have happened?* he wonders.

Gerald finally gets close enough to see the cause of the gridlock. His agitation is mellowed by a kind thought for the victims of the accident. On reflection, he wonders how the bad decision of one man could harm others and bring hundreds of vehicles on a major road to a halt.

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Those who understand the purpose of traffic lights respect its wisdom. They know that obedience to this law guarantees order and safety to all road users. By analogy, we can see in every aspect of life how the wisdom of the Creator rules the universe. Take, for example, the perfect arrangement of the human body. Each organ works harmoniously with the rest of the body in the service of

the whole. Observe how insects work together with flowers in the pollination process. Notice how one creature's waste is another's food. Behold how the majestic oceans regulate the earth's climate, like the human circulatory system.

All around us stand witnesses to the perfection and omnipotence of The Creator.

His wisdom is simply breathtaking, and we would be wise to learn from the observation of our surroundings. Biomimicry, the design practice that learns from and mimics the strategies found in nature to solve human environmental and health problems, is a welcome development. For example, the Eastgate Centre in Harare, Zimbabwe's largest office and shopping complex, was built without a conventional air-conditioning system, yet its temperature remains regulated year-round because the building design was inspired by the self-cooling system

used by termites to keep their mounds cool. This approach resulted in a significant reduction in energy consumption, carbon dioxide emissions, and energy costs.

We sometimes look to Nature for inspiration in the design and invention of products, but rarely do we look to her for guidance on how to live a more harmonious life. For example, constant movement is a fundamental requirement for renewal and survival. This is the law of movement. A stream that stops flowing will soon lose its vitality and become a stagnant breeding ground for insects that transmit dangerous diseases. We see similar ill-fated consequences to the human body if blood flow is hampered. The same applies to the earth, should it stop rotating around the sun. In its movement, everything in Nature contributes something to the whole, either voluntarily or involuntarily. It must!

Closely linked with the law of movement is the law of equilibrium. As human beings, we must breathe out carbon dioxide in order to breathe in oxygen. Food intake is balanced by waste elimination. Work and rest are required for a healthy body. The law of equilibrium is upheld and furthered by harmony, which lies in the fulfillment of all the Primordial Laws of Creation. If we truly understand the wisdom of these Laws of Creation, we will adjust ourselves voluntarily to this constant movement in all areas of our lives. If we do not flow with the spirit of the movement that permeates Nature, we become stagnant and susceptible to

all kinds of illnesses. A woman who hoards her seeds and refuses to give them to the earth will eventually forfeit both the seeds and the harvest. The same applies to our abilities; undeveloped talents will be lost. A man who hoards the money he has saved and refuses to invest in a reasonable enterprise or his education will watch that money depreciate over time. But a man who, depriving himself of short-term comforts, spends the little he has on developing his small farm and is confident of a good harvest in six months is on his way to claiming all the good things that Creation offers him. Rapid, unnatural movement is just as dangerous as being stagnant. Change in Nature is gradual and rhythmic. Night gradually turns into day. Herein lies an insight that will protect many from deceptive schemes promising quick spiritual or physical transformation. The consequences of these schemes often don't show up until much later.

Everything must be wisely put to use; everything must be in constant, steady movement, otherwise, it will decay. This is just one example of the guidance we are afforded if we take the time to patiently observe Nature and adjust ourselves to her laws, such as the law of movement. If we adapt ourselves accordingly, the power propelling all movement in Nature will strengthen us spiritually and physically. Should we neglect to do this, we will stand helpless.

Through science, we have a glimpse into the extensive preparations over billions of years that had to precede our arrival on earth as human beings. Do you ever wonder what keeps your heart beating? We are completely dependent on

the Creator for our existence. We can hardly comprehend all the events that make it possible for us to take a single breath. The order and precision of Nature give evidence of its Creator's perfection. Having created a perfect work, He need not interfere. In prayer, we sometimes think that the Creator personally and arbitrarily grants us what we seek but that is not so. In His perfect Creation, everything we need for our growth and supreme happiness has been provided. With the right attitude, we simply obtain a connection to those regions where the help we seek can be proffered. Everything flows according to the established rhythm of Creation, also known as the laws of Nature.

When we disregard the natural rhythm of Creation in favor of our ideas, gridlock, chaos, and devastation will be the result. Earthly laws established by the state can be flawed and are not the same as the immutable Laws of Creation, but in the case of traffic lights, we can easily see their benefit in maintaining order at intersections. Individuals who break this traffic law not only affect themselves but also sometimes disrupt the progress of those in their environment. Those caught in traffic gridlock due to a car accident would not blame the mayor of the city for the accident but rather the person who caused the accident by disregarding the traffic lights. If that is so, why then do we question the perfection of the Creator in view of the suffering and chaos caused by human beings? Perhaps, one may think, the Creator should interfere and immediately punish all those who cause suffering to others. Ah! but who

among us is innocent of this offense? Keep in mind that causing others to suffer is not limited to physical harm. It also includes reputational and emotional harm caused by unkindness and lack of self-control. Secretly harboring selfish desires at the expense of others is also included here. Were the Creator to immediately destroy all those who cause suffering, who among us would remain?