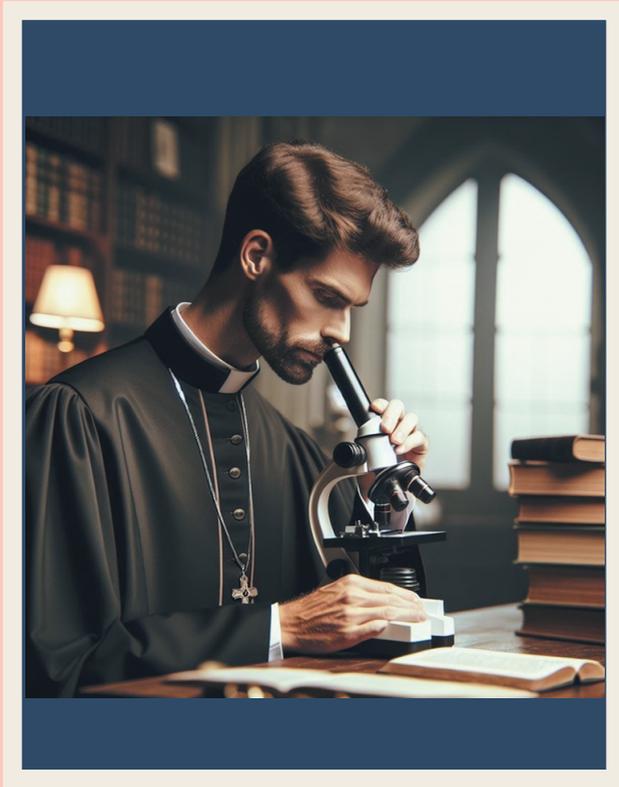


FAITH IS SANITY



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Be as wise as serpents and as
innocent as doves.

Jesus

God is not far from any of us: in
him we live, move, and have our
being.

Paul

Forword

I admit to being what is known as an Excel Christian, a term coined by a pastor to describe believers who are grounded and wary of fanaticism. I find it difficult to prevent my brain from participating in this venture called faith, and I don't even try.

I am aware that the world does not revolve around me, does not require my ability to understand, and certainly does not wait for my approval as it rushes forward from one incomprehensibility to another.

Even less has the Creator of the Universe built anything on the premise that I, with my fragile brain, would make a philosophical breakthrough behind my desk or even for one fleeting moment grasp something of what is in the mind of the Almighty now, always, and forever.

So, I know my place as a human and the limitations that come with it, but I still believe that God created me in His own image. This means, in my understanding, that I have the right and even the duty to use the thinking ability that I have.

I certainly do not mean that my understanding exceeds even the average human level, let alone that I am particularly intelligent. However, I am wary of the attitude that sometimes appears in all groups of people (not just believers) that requires the acceptance of various viewpoints, perceptions, and beliefs as they are, without critical consideration.

In this book, I have tried to examine various questions, beliefs, and thought patterns that I have encountered as

openly as possible, without intending to offend or pressure those who believe in a different way.

I have published most of these short writings earlier in Finnish in a book named “Usko ja järki” (Faith and Intellect). I decided to produce an English translation for two reasons.

First, I have eagerly tried to write comments on some YouTube videos and found it frustrating. One obviously cannot develop the arguments fully in such a short format and what is more, my comments have often been misunderstood or even erased. In this book my thoughts are at least theoretically available to a large audience.

Another reason for the English translation was to try how well the artificial intelligence manages to do the job. In this case I used Copilot. I had previously been impressed by its performance when translating a text from Finnish to English, and from that further to Swedish, then to German, and so forth through a long chain of European languages I do not understand, and finally back to Finnish.

The final Finnish translation was obviously not the same as the initial text, but the meaning had not changed at all. The language was actually even better and more fluent in the final Finnish version!

I decided to give the AI a chance in translating the book of mine into English. It did a decent job to my Finnish eyes. You are welcome to form your own opinion. I had to do many corrections relying on my own command of English more than on that of an AI tool. I hope I did not change the text to worse formulations.

I write this first chapter on my own because I want to blame the Copilot for some things I have noticed when using it. And I do not wish to have it to read and to translate texts that it may find offensive.

Copilot is definitely “woke” as they say in English. The Finnish language is gender neutral in nature. It is said to be explained by the cold climate: The clothes were the same for both sexes and there were thick layers of them due to the cold climate, so it was not safe to guess if the person was he or she. That is why we have just one word “hän” for both.

The “woke” Copilote had translated the word “hän” to “they” throughout the text, which my English teacher had never accepted.

Just for fun I once tested the political correctness of Copilote by feeding it sentences like “A rich white man gives a Christmas to a poor black child”, and invariably it told me: “I am not able to continue this discussion. I wish You can understand that.”

But I do not wish to hurt anyone with my texts. So if you find some parts of it offensive (I truly wish you do not) the fault is mine and mine alone. I wish you a good time in reading.

Consciousness

Neuroscientists say that human consciousness and its nature are not yet fully understood. Even those who consider it primarily a phenomenon related to the brain, which cannot exist independently of it, do not try to deny its existence per se. And it would be impossible to deny an obvious fact, even though some people's materialistic worldview drives them to try to explain it purely as a physical, chemical, and biological phenomenon.

The fact that scientists admit that consciousness cannot be fully explained is a very significant point. It strongly challenges the materialistic worldview, as consciousness seems to be something that transcends the boundaries of known sciences. Despite this, materialistically inclined scientists seem to believe that science will eventually succeed in explaining consciousness in natural scientific terms.

Materialists may also downplay the mystery of consciousness and try to make it appear as just a set of relatively small questions that have not yet been answered: Once science solves those smaller problems, the mystery of consciousness is also hoped to find its scientific explanation.

One attempt to deny the uniqueness of consciousness alongside all the physical events around us is also to refer to everyday sensory experiences, such as smelling the scents of a summer garden, hearing the birds sing, and feeling the boards of a sun-warmed terrace under bare feet.

All those sensations can indeed be explained in scientific terms, but that does not provide any answer to why the person experiencing these things has a strong feeling of a thinking and feeling self, which is aware of its own consciousness, is separate and in some sense independent of the surrounding physical reality, and is able to observe it as if from an outsider's perspective.

A materialist must try to explain these feelings. In the absence of a better theory, it is popular to talk about the illusion of consciousness or self, but upon closer inspection, this is not any kind of explanation of the phenomenon itself. It merely gives known and indisputable observations a new name and attempts to make them sound less relevant.

An illusion is generally understood as a feeling or perception that is not anchored in reality. A materialist scientist believes that only measurement results and the numbers describing them are reality. Since consciousness cannot be measured, it must be classified as an illusion.

This setup also shows how even scientists can resort to circular reasoning in defending their own atheistic and materialistic ideology. It starts from the premise that nothing separate from or outside the physical world exists because there is no convincing evidence for it. And when phenomena are encountered in research that cannot be explained in scientific terms, they are called illusions and claimed not to exist in reality.

It is quite easy for a Christian to explain consciousness as part of the reality created by God. When God is a conscious and feeling person, a human being created in His

Faith and reason are not in conflict with each other. Even in science, one must make assumptions that cannot be proven correct. This can be compared to believing, although atheists do not like to use that word. If one arrives at conclusions from materialistic premises that are claimed to prove the premises correct, it is circular reasoning. Natural science cannot say anything about supernatural things because it does not even study them. It is often claimed that the increase in scientific knowledge has made faith unnecessary. This is not true, as every new scientific discovery generates new and increasingly difficult questions. If there were a so-called 'god of the gaps,' science would have continuously created more space for him as it developed, but the True God does not agree to live in the niches reserved for him by humans. Humans have the freedom to move away from God, but at the same time, they step further away from reality and truth. Reality is in God. He created it. Faith is sanity.

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