

From a Caterpillar to a Butterfly

H A R U N Y A H Y A

If you had 450-500 eggs and if you had to preserve them outside, what would you do? The wisest course for you would be to take precautions to prevent them from being scattered around, say, by the wind, or other environmental factors. Being one of the animals that lay the most eggs at one time (450-500), the silkworms use a very intelligent way to protect their eggs: they unite the eggs with a viscous substance (thread) they secrete to prevent them from being scattered around.

The caterpillars that pop out of their eggs firstly find a safe branch for themselves and then get tied to this branch with the same thread. Later, to promote their own development, they start to spin a cocoon for themselves with the thread they secrete. It takes 3-4 days for a caterpillar that has opened its eyes very recently to life to complete this process. During this period, the caterpillar makes thousands of turns and produces a thread an average of 900-1,500 metres long. At the end of this process, it starts a new task through which it undergoes a metamorphosis to become an elegant butterfly.

Neither the action taken by the mother silkworm to protect its eggs, nor the behaviour of a tiny caterpillar devoid of any awareness, education or knowledge can be explained by evolution. First of all, the ability of the mother to produce the thread it uses to secure its eggs is miraculous. The newly-born caterpillar's knowing the most suitable environment for itself, its spinning a cocoon in accordance with it, its undergoing a metamorphosis, and its coming through this metamorphosis without any problem are beyond human comprehension. **Hence, we can simply say that each caterpillar is born into the world with a foreknowledge of what to do, which means that it was 'taught' all of these things before it was born.**

Let us explain this with an example. What would you think if you saw a new-born baby standing up a few hours after his birth, getting together the things he needs to make his bed (like quilt, pillow, mattress), and later putting all these together neatly, making his bed and lying down on it? After you recover from the shock of the event, you would probably think that the baby must have been taught in an extraordinary way in his mother's womb to perform such a process. The case of the caterpillars is no different from the baby in this example.

This again leads us to the same conclusions: these living creatures come into life, behave and live in the way determined by God Who has created them. The Qur'anic verse stating that **God has inspired the honeybee and commanded it to make honey (Surat an-Nahl, 68-69)** provides an example of the great secret of the world of living beings. This secret is that all living beings have bowed to God's will and follow the fate determined by Him. This is why the honeybee makes honey and the silkworm produces silk.

THE SYMMETRY IN WINGS

When we look at the butterfly wings in the pictures, we see a perfect symmetry prevailing over them. These lace-like wings are so adorned with patterns, spots and colours that each of them is like a work of art.

When you look at the wings of these butterflies, you notice that the patterns and colours on both sides are fully identical, no matter how intricate they may seem. Even the smallest dot is present on both wings, thereby introducing a flawless order and symmetry.

In addition, none of the colours on these thin wings mixes with the other, each being sharply set apart from the other. Actually, these colours are formed by the amassing of tiny scales clustered one on top of another. Isn't it a wonder how these small scales that are easily dispersed with your hand's slightest touch can be arranged in both wings without any mistake in their disposal so as to produce exactly the same pattern. Even the replacement of a single scale would destroy the symmetry in the wings and impair their aesthetics. **However, you never see any muddle in the wings of any butterfly on the earth. They are as neat and elegant as if made by an artist. And they are indeed made by an Exalted Creator.**