

## How to Get Clues

WHEN YOU WISH TO FIND A CLUE,  
TRY TO CHANGE YOUR POINT OF VIEW!

Which came first—**the chicken or the egg**? I am pretty sure that you have already tried to unlock this challenging riddle. I was still a teenager when I came across it for the very first time. Back then I felt—as most people do—that there can't be a logical answer to this puzzle. If the chicken came first, where did this very first chicken originally come from? And if the egg came first, who had originally laid this very first egg? From a purely logical point of view, there doesn't seem to be any way out of this vicious circle.

But there is a unique solution, and in this book we will learn what it is. Once you understand how the riddle works, the solution is straightforward; and it can help us discover who we really are in the universe. Our solution even has the power to unlock the riddle to find (no kidding) God! This is because we can transform our original riddle to something far greater: Which came first—**creator or creation**? For pious readers, the answer is clear: "The creator, of course!" Others will oppose: "There is no creator. How could there be a creation?" Soon we will realize that there is a much deeper and all-embracing solution than these two. But what could it be? Did I get your attention? You must now be very hungry to get straight into this book, and that's what an introduction is all about. Pretty good for just one page, right?

## Which Comes First—the Chicken or the Egg?

LIFE IS ABOUT LEARNING,  
NOT ABOUT WINNING.

When I look at humankind today, I have the uncomfortable feeling that most people care about their money and profit, but not about how everyone can live in true harmony with nature. This is so sad because money and profit can't buy a new earth to live on. If we continue to ruin our planet and don't succeed in colonizing other planets, we'll have wiped out ourselves. The evolution of life will move past us if we aren't smart enough to keep up with nature.

So let's talk about ourselves and the evolution of life. A straight way into the topic is a riddle that was already posed in the first century AD by the Greek writer Plutarch: Which comes first—the chicken or the egg?<sup>55</sup> In those days, it was common belief that everything on earth and in the sky had been individually created by Gods: Sheep as sheep, birds as birds. People had no idea that millions of species have been evolving on our planet throughout billions of years.

Plutarch's riddle addresses the relation of parent and child. Generally speaking, it addresses the relation of cause and effect. The riddle itself holds both a hint and a trick for us. The word "comes" leads us into the right direction: The solution must be *dynamic*. But then the word "first" puts us on the wrong track. As we will see in this fourth challenge, there's neither "the chicken" nor "the egg"; the chickens that

live on earth today are genetically different from those that lived a few hundred or a million years ago. The same is true for eggs. Chickens and eggs have never stopped evolving. In one of my earlier books,<sup>56</sup> I recommended speaking of verbs (“chicken-ing,” “egg-ing”). The disadvantage of our nouns is that they cover up what life is all about—unfolding! So, the solution to Plutarch’s riddle is of the same type again: Neither chicken nor egg comes first (figure 23).

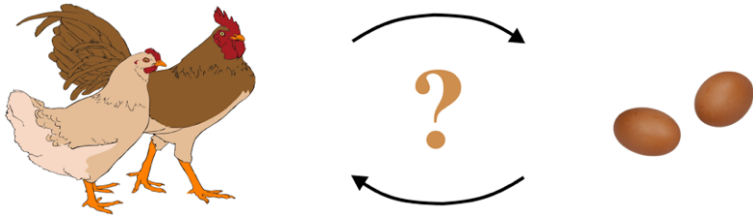


Fig. 23: Which comes first—the chicken or the egg?

I wonder why mankind can’t help thinking in terms of “being first.” We’ll soon learn that the evolution of life isn’t based on such concepts as “being first” or “being strongest.” Life is about learning, not about winning. But the news that we get to watch is often about being first or being strongest: the *first* company to reach \$1 trillion market value, the *richest* man or woman, the world *champions* in some kind of sports. Who cares about those who are second or third or last? We could easily slow down the race for being number one if we only wanted to—by doing better in regulating free markets, by listening to those who aren’t on the winning side of life, and by making way for sports that have only winners.



**Markolf H. Niemz, PhD**

# **SEEING OUR WORLD THROUGH DIFFERENT EYES**

**Thoughts on Space and Time,  
Abraham Lincoln, and God**

**translated by James David Dunn**

**What  
Humanity  
Deserves in  
Times Like  
These**