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आ नौ भद्राः कर्तवो यन्तु विश्वतोऽर्दब्धासो अर्परीतास उद्भिर्दः । (RgVeda) *Let noble thoughts come to us from every side*

Science - Spirituality Dialogue

Fine-Tuning in the Cosmos



A Discussion with Prof. Michael Behe (left), the well-known biochemist from the University of Pennsylvania and Dr. T. D. Singh (right); Physical Organic Chemist, Founding-Director of Bhaktivedanta Institute.

Dr. T. D. Singh (Henceforth TDS): Today, from the scientific point of view, even though you may not be able to prove in a scientific way, in a rigorous, rational, and experimental manner, the existence of God, I do think that to some extent, we can have a very reasonable argument regarding his existence. Just like you are pointing out about intelligence design, I think someday we need to show that there is a divine principle which exists but may not be exactly conceivable by our brain capacity. If some reasonable arguments in this regard are produced, I think it would be quite helpful for all people.

Prof. Michael J. Behe (Henceforth MJB): Yes, I think so too. Certainly in the popular press, particularly in the U.S., it's always science versus religion. You know, the advances of science have made religion retreat, etc. And I think it's ironic because, in the past 50 years at least, the discoveries

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Colloquium at IIT Kharagpur, March 2nd, 2013



“There can never be any real opposition between religion and science; for the one is the complement of the other. Every serious and reflective person realizes, I think, that the religious element in his nature must be recognized and cultivated if all the powers of the human soul are to act together in perfect balance and harmony. And indeed it was not by accident that the greatest thinkers of all ages were deeply religious souls.”

-- Max Planck, (Nobel Laureate in Physics)

To Know about Life, Matter, and their Interactions is called Knowledge

of science have pointed more and more strongly to something beyond the universe that is necessary to explain what we find in the universe. Nobody knows why the universe started, nobody knows why it has a fine-tuning that it sees, nobody knows how life started, or nobody, despite what people say, knows how the structures of cells first started. All of these things point strongly toward an element beyond nature: God, or a spiritual force or something like that.

TDS: Besides intelligent design, are there any other scientific arguments, which could suggest about the existence of God?

MJB: I don't think there are other scientific arguments. Because science, I think is a process of trying to explain the physical world, doing experiments and seeing how things work. So science essentially just accepts what we have, laws of nature and so on. The only way, I think, science could point to God is by saying, well, what we found here requires an explanation which is not in the universe itself. It looks like it's beyond the universe. And the only thing I can think of that would require something like intelligent design or fine-tuning. Something, essentially that is not an outgrowth of the laws of nature, something else. For more arguments for God, you would have to go to philosophical ones, like why does anything exist at all, and why did the universe begin to exist, when and at what point did it not exist, and so on.

[Excerpt from the book, *God, Intelligent Design and Fine-tuning: A dialogue between T. D. Singh and Michael J. Behe*, Bhaktivedanta Institute, Kolkata]

On the Shoulders of the Giants

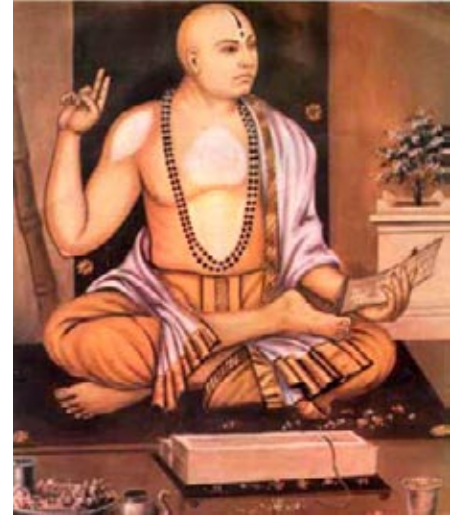
Śrīpādā Madhvācārya Bhagavatpādā

The Great Pioneer of Dvaita School of Vedānta

Śrī Madhvācārya was the chief proponent of Tattvavāda "Philosophy of Reality", popularly known as the Dvaita school of Hindu philosophy. He became the great *Vaiṣṇava* acharya of the 13th century of medieval India who revolutionized religious thought, by successive waves of doctrinal and ritualistic reforms.

Sri Madhvacharya was born at Pajakakshetra of Udupi in the South Karnataka, on the Vijaya dashami Day of a Vilambi year (1238 AD). His parents Madhyageha Bhatta and Vedavati named him as Vasudeva. At the early age of eleven years he entered into the monastic order of life by receiving initiation from Śrī Acyuta-Prajña. He was given the name as Pūrṇaprajña at the time of his initiation into *sannyāsa*. He had mastered the subjects of logic, grammar, Vedas, and Bhagavata at a very early age. He was latter received the title Ānanda Tīrtha by his spiritual master for defeating the great logician scholars

and pundits who considered *Nyāya* or logic, *Vaiśeṣika* or argument, and *saṅkhya* or deduction to be the philosophies that uphold *Anumāna* or inference as an authority.



Ānandatīrtha argued that perception, inference and

testimony, are usually regarded as the main sources of human knowledge and one cannot come to complete understanding of reality with inference alone. If inference did not rest on perception or on testimony (Scriptural evidence) as its final basis, speculations of all kinds could be made by one's own limited sensual perception or inductive thinking.

He stated that "If we choose not to recognize the authority of sensual experience, and if we set aside the testimony of speech, writings, and revelations, pure unaided reasoning cannot establish any subject as an absolute truth whatsoever, for every argument implies that it lends itself to some kind of sense experience, either that of the arguer or that of an authority, be he a spiritual teacher or the Lord Himself or that of the scripture written by one of the same."

The philosophy of Śrī Madhvācārya is *Dvaitavāda*, the philosophy of dualism. It states the five kinds of differences (*pancha-bheda*) between - God and the individual soul (*deva-jīva*); God and matter (*jata-deva*); individuals (*jīva-jīva*); individuals and matter (*jīva-jata*); and lastly different types of matter i.e. earth, water, fire, air, ether, mind, intelligence and false ego (*jata-jata*).

He has authored celebrated commentaries on various Vedic scriptures and also wrote treaties like *Bhāgavata-tātparyā* highlighting the essential teachings of the *purāṇas*. His works on *Tattva-vāda* are collectively called as *Sarva-mūla granthas*.

He thus established his mission by highlighting the service attitude of the *Jīvas* and his relationship with the Supreme Being, thus enlightening all the people about the path of *bhakti marga*, unalloyed devotional service. He also established the deity worship with the installation of the deity of Krishna at Udupi that was recovered from the clod of Gopichand at Malpe beach. Thus by eliminating *māyāvāda* (monotheism), *sūnyavāda* (voidism) and all other atheistic philosophies of the time he inspired everyone towards the highest elevation of human life.

Fivefold Truths of the Vedāntasūtra

The book of *Vedāntasūtra* has four chapters (*adhyāyas*), and there are four divisions (*pādas*) in each chapter. The first two chapters discuss the relationship of the living entity with the Supreme Lord. This is called as *sambandha-jñāna*, or the knowledge of relationship. The third chapter describes how one can act in one's relationship with the Supreme Lord. This is called *abhideya-jñāna*. The fourth chapter describes the result of such action. This is known as *prayojana-jñāna*. Each chapter contains a number of *sūtras* or codes. The total number of *sūtras* in *Vedāntasūtra* varies in different commentaries. Śrīpāda Śankarācārya presents 555 *sūtras*, Śrīpāda Rāmānujācārya 545 *sūtras* and Śrīla Baladeva Vidyābhūṣaṇa 558 *sūtras* respectively.

“*sambandha-jñāna* — the knowledge of relationship.
abhideya-jñāna — how one can act in one's relationship with the Supreme Lord.
prayojana-jñāna — the result of such action.”

The *Vedāntasūtra* speaks of fivefold *tattvas*, truths or realities. These are, (1) *Īśvara* or God; (2) *Jīva* or Soul; (3) *Kāla* or Time; (4) *Prakṛti* or Matter; and (5) *Karma* or Action.

(1) **Īśvara or God:** Lord Brahmā, the first created cosmic living being defines *Īśvara*, God, as the Supreme original Personality (*Ādīpuruṣa*). His transcendental body is made of three spiritual elements, *sat* (eternity), *cit* (knowledge) and *ānanda* (bliss), *saccidānandavigraha*. He is the origin of everything, animate and inanimate, and

is the cause of all causes, *sarvakāraṇakāraṇam*. He is the Supreme Controller and the prime mover of all cosmic manifestation. He has Universal Consciousness and He is the well-wisher of every living being. He is beyond the perception of the material senses. However, His symptoms are visible in the effects (products) of His creation. The well-known physicist Max Born stated, “I saw in it (atom) the key to the deepest secrets of nature, and it revealed to me the greatness of creation and the Creator.” He is Supreme Eternal among all eternals and Supreme Consciousness among all consciousness, *nityo nityānāṁ cetanaś cetanānām* (*Kaṭha Upaniṣad* 2.2.13). He can only be understood by the science of *bhaktiyoga*, devotional path, *bhaktiyāmābhijānāti* (*Bhagavadgītā* 18.55). In fact, the goal of Vedanta terminates in the devotional service of the Supreme Lord.



Īśvara or God

(... continued in next issue)

[Excerpt from the book, *Vedanta and Science Series: Life and Origin of the Universe*, Bhaktivedanta Institute, Kolkata]

BOOK — GOD, INTELLIGENT DESIGN AND FINE-TUNING

A Dialogue between Dr. T. D. Singh and Prof. Michael J. Behe



Is God no longer necessary in a world that is increasingly influenced by a scientific temper? Or, on the contrary, have the findings of modern sciences forced us to approach the question of the existence of God in new ways? *God, Intelligent Design and Fine-Tuning* is a profound exchange between Dr. T. D. Singh and prominent biochemist Prof. Michael J. Behe from Lehigh University, Pennsylvania, USA, exploring how recent advancements in science points amazingly towards God.

You have the cell, and you have all its fantastic complexity and all the molecular machines that make it run and so on. ... you know because of their interactive complexity that it's been designed... it's only under the direction of an intelligent guiding agent that such a thing could happen.

---Prof. Michael J. Behe (Professor of bio-chemistry)

pp.66, Softbound; Rs.125/ US\$5;
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 Online Store:

<http://www.binstitute.org/bookstore>

I think someday we need to show that there is a divine principle which exists but may not be exactly conceivable by our brain capacity.

--- Dr. T. D. Singh



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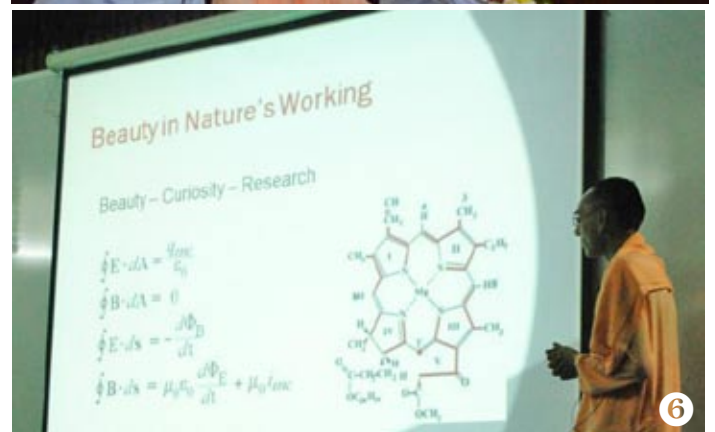
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An interactive program was organized to understand the deeper insights of Ultimate reality from the viewpoints of some of the greatest thinkers of all ages. The session lasted more than two hours, and received the active participation of students of IIT Kharagpur and intellectuals from various fields of science and spirituality.

1. Dr. P L Narasimhan from IIT Kharagpur delivering his lecture.
2. Inauguration of the First Students' Ezine on Science and Spiritual Quest published by Bhaktivedanta Institute.
3. Prof. S. Ghosh, describing the role of Giants.
4. The assembly of Intellectuals.
5. Discussion between speakers and students.
6. God's Mechanics by Shri V. Agarwal, Director Bhaktivedanta Institute, Kolkata.

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