

Scientists and Religion

(part 1 of 2): Is Religion and Science in Conflict?



The attributes of the universe which have hitherto been discovered by science point to the existence of God. Science leads us to the conclusion that the universe has a Creator and this Creator is perfect in might, wisdom and knowledge. It is religion that shows us the way in knowing God. It is therefore possible to say that science is a method we use to better see and investigate the realities addressed by religion. Nevertheless, today, some of the scientists who step forth in the name of science take an entirely different stand. In their view, scientific discoveries do not imply the creation of God. They have, on the contrary, projected an atheistic understanding of science by saying that it is not possible to reach God through scientific data: they claim that science and religion are two clashing notions.

As a matter of fact, this atheistic understanding of science is quite recent. Until a few centuries ago, science and religion were never thought to clash with each other, and science was accepted as a method of proving the existence of God. The so-called atheistic understanding of science flourished only after the materialist and positivist philosophies swept through the world of science in the 18th and 19th centuries.

Particularly after Charles Darwin postulated the theory of evolution in 1859, circles holding a materialistic world view started to ideologically defend this theory, which they looked upon as an alternative to religion. The theory of evolution argued that the universe was not created by a creator but came into being by chance. As a result, it was asserted that religion was in conflict with science. The British researchers Michael Baigent, Richard Leigh and Henry Lincoln said on this issue:

For Isaac Newton, a century and a half before Darwin, science was not separate from religion but, on the contrary, an aspect of religion, and ultimately subservient to it. ... But the science of Darwin's time became precisely that,

divorcing itself from the context in which it had previously existed and establishing itself as a rival absolute, an alternative repository of meaning. As a result, religion and science were no longer working in concert, but rather stood opposed to each other, and humanity was increasingly forced to choose between them. (Michael Baigent, Richard Leigh, Henry Lincoln, "The Messianic Legacy", Gorgi Books, London: 1991, p. 177-178.)

As we stated before, the so-called split between science and religion was totally ideological. Some scientists, who earnestly believed in materialism, conditioned themselves to prove that the universe had no creator and they devised various theories in this context. The theory of evolution was the most famous and the most important of them. In the field of astronomy as well certain theories were developed such as the "steady-state theory" or the "chaos theory". However, all of these theories that denied creation were demolished by science itself, as we have clearly shown in other articles.

Today, scientists who still keep to these theories and insist on denying all things religious, are dogmatic and bigoted people, who have conditioned themselves not to believe in God. The famous English zoologist and evolutionist D.M.S. Watson confesses to this dogmatism as he explains why he and his colleagues accept the theory of evolution: "If so, it will present a parallel to the theory of evolution itself, a theory universally accepted, not because it can be proved by logically coherent evidence to be true, but because the only alternative, special creation, is clearly incredible." (D.M.S. Watson, "Adaptation", Nature, no. 124, p. 233)

What Watson means by "special creation" is God's creation. As acknowledged, this scientist finds this "unacceptable". But why does he? Is it because science says so? Actually it does not. On the contrary, science proves the truth of creation. The only reason why Watson looks upon this fact as unacceptable is because he has conditioned himself to deny the existence of God. All other evolutionists take the same stand.

Evolutionists rely not on science but on materialist philosophy and they distort science to make it agree with this philosophy. A geneticist, and an outspoken evolutionist from Harvard University, Richard Lewontin, confesses to this truth:

It is not that the methods and institutions of science somehow compel us to accept a material explanation of the phenomenal world, but, on the contrary, that we are forced by our a priori adherence to material causes to create an apparatus of investigation and a set of concepts that produce material explanations, no matter how counter-intuitive, no matter how mystifying to the uninitiated. Moreover, that materialism is absolute, so we cannot allow a Divine Foot in the door. (Richard Lewontin, The Demon-Haunted World, The New York Review of Books, January, 9, 1997, p. 28)

On the other hand, today, just as in history, there are, as opposed to this dogmatic materialist group, scientists who confirm God's existence, and regard science as a way of knowing Him. Some trends developing in the USA such as "Creationism" or "Intelligent Design" prove by scientific evidence that all living things were created by God.

(part 2 of 2): Religious Scientists

This shows us that science and religion are not conflicting sources of information, but that, on the contrary, science is a method that verifies the absolute truths provided by religion. The clash between religion and science can only hold true for certain religions that incorporate some superstitious elements as well as divine sources. However, this is certainly out of the question for Islam, which relies only on the pure revelation of God. Moreover, Islam particularly advocates scientific enquiry, and announces that probing the universe is a method to explore the creation of God. The following verse of the Quran addresses this issue:

“Do they not look at the sky above them? How We have built it and adorned it, and there are no rifts therein? And the earth - We have spread it out, and set thereon mountains standing firm, and caused it to bring forth plants of beautiful kinds (in pairs). An insight and a Reminder for every slave who turns to God. And We send down from the sky blessed water whereby We give growth unto gardens and the grain of crops. And tall palm-trees, with shoots of fruit-stalks, piled one over another.” (Quran 50:6-10)

As the above verses imply, the Quran always urges people to think, to reason and to explore everything in the world in which they live. This is because science supports religion, saves the individual from ignorance, and causes him to think more consciously; it opens wide one's world of thought and helps one grasp the signs of God self-evident in the universe. Prominent German physicist Max Planck said:

Anybody who has been seriously engaged in scientific work of any kind realizes that over the entrance to the gates of the temple of science are written the words: Ye must have faith. It is a quality which the scientist cannot dispense with. (J. De Vries, Essential of Physical Science, Wm.B.Eerdmans Pub.Co., Grand Rapids, SD 1958, p. 15.)

All the issues we have treated so far simply put it that the existence of the universe and all living things cannot be explained by coincidences. Many scientists who have left their mark on the world of science have confirmed, and still confirm this great reality. The more people learn about the universe, the

higher does their admirations for its flawless order become. Every newly-discovered detail supports creation in an unquestionable way.

The great majority of modern physicists accept the fact of creation as we set foot in the 21st century. David Darling also maintains that neither time, nor space, nor matter, nor energy, nor even a tiny spot or a cavity existed at the beginning. A slight quick movement and a modest quiver and fluctuation occurred. Darling ends by saying that when the cover of this cosmic box was opened, the tendrils of the miracle of creation appeared from beneath it.

Besides, it is already known that almost all the founders of diverse scientific branches believed in God and His divine books. The greatest physicists in history, Newton, Faraday, Kelvin and Maxwell are a few examples of such scientists.

In the time of Isaac Newton, the great physicist, scientists believed that the movements of the heavenly bodies and planets could be explained by different laws. Nevertheless, Newton believed that the creator of earth and space was the same, and therefore they had to be explained by the same laws. He said:

“This most beautiful system of the sun, planets, and comets could only proceed from the counsel and dominion of an intelligent and powerful Being. This Being governs all things, not as the soul of the world, but as Lord over all, and on account of His dominion. He is wont to be called Lord God, Universal Ruler.” (“Principia”)

As is evident, thousands of scientists who have been doing research in the fields of physics, mathematics, and astronomy since the Middle-Ages all agree on the idea that the universe is created by a single Creator and always focus on the same point. The founder of physical astronomy, Johannes Kepler, stated his strong belief in God in one of his books where he wrote:

“Since we astronomers are priests of the highest God in regard to the book of nature, it befits us to be thoughtful, not of the glory of our minds, but rather, above all else, of the glory of God.” (Dan Graves, *Scientists of Faith*, p. 51)

The great physicist, William Thompson (Lord Kelvin), who established thermo-dynamics on a formal scientific basis, was also a Christian who believed in God. He had strongly opposed Darwin’s theory of evolution and totally rejected it. In 1903, short before his death, he made the unequivocal statement that, “With regard to the origin of life, science... positively affirms creative power.” (David Darling, *Deep Time*, Delacorte Press, 1989, New York.)

One of the professors of physics at Oxford University, Robert Mattheus states the same fact in his book published in 1992 where he explains that DNA molecules were created by God. Mattheus says that all these stages proceed in a perfect harmony from a single cell to a living baby, then to a little child, and finally to an adolescent. All these events can be explained only by a miracle, just

as in all the other stages of biology. Mattheus asks how such a perfect and complex organism can emerge from such a simple and tiny cell and how a glorious human is created from a cell even smaller than the dot on the letter 'I'. He finally concludes that this is nothing short of a miracle. (Robert Matthews, Unraveling the Mind of God, London Bridge, July, 1995, p.8)

Some other scientists who admit that the universe is created by a Creator and who are known by their cited attributes are:

Robert Boyle (the father of modern chemistry)

Iona William Petty (known for his studies on statistics and modern economy)

Michael Faraday (one of the greatest physicists of all times)

Gregory Mendel (the father of genetics; he invalidated Darwinism with his discoveries in the science of genetics)

Louis Pasteur (the greatest name in bacteriology; he declared war on Darwinism)

John Dalton (the father of atomic theory)

Blaise Pascal (one of the most important mathematicians)

John Ray (the most important name in British natural history)

Nicolaus Steno (a famous stratigrapher who investigated earth layers)

Carolus Linnaeus (the father of biological classification)

Georges Cuvier (the founder of comparative anatomy)

Matthew Maury (the founder of oceanography)

Thomas Anderson (one the pioneers in the field of organic chemistry)