

Does God Exist? What Does Science Say? An Analysis in the Context of Eka Śaraṇa Hari Nāma Dharma

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Abstract

Atheism and rationalism have been gaining ground gradually. They are, however, to be considered better than that of ‘religion without science’. Though the atheists are citing some statistics that the spread of atheism has proved to herald a better world devoid of criminals, injustice and violence etc., their advocacy for total banishment of God from our world, it seems, is not supportable. The present position of science, in this context is dubious. Atheists cite quotations from scientists’ writings to prove that there is no God or total banishment of God from our world may, as they say, in no way, be harmful to mankind because God has no role to play in the creation, sustenance or destruction of the world. On the other hand, the theists are seen hardly going away from their own domains of religious boundaries, that is, the scriptures of their own religion.

But, to the consideration of this author, people of the world today are not ready to accept a world without God. And, it seems, to question the existence of God is also not justifiable.

The world today, to the consideration of the author, demands religion to be set up in the scientific point of view. People require a single religion and a single God today and if it is not possible, they want a religion in which they can worship their own God in their own way as a private affair.

The following discussion is an essay to justify that the scientists today, do not deny the existence of God and a single God for all religions of the world can also be considered where people of all religions of the world will be able to worship their own God (or gods/goddesses) as a private matter of their own, and, at the same time, religion will also be set up in scientific point of view and then all allegations of religion against spreading ill effects in human society will be wiped out.

Keywords: atheism, science, God, religion, quantum mechanics, particles, scientists

*“Science without Religion is lame
Religion without Science is blind”
Albert Einstein*

Introduction:

The author attempts in this essay to bridge the widening gap between science and religion by referring to the most quoted lines of Albert Einstein as cited above.

By the word ‘religion’ Einstein is most probably going to refer to the belief in God, that is, theism. The soul of most of the religions is God. No doubt, it can unanimously be accepted that the basis of 80

percent superstitions of the whole world is religion. The author more or less accepts some allegations against religion such as: 1) the number of bloodshed that happen in the name of religion transcends all others causes, 2) religion is fed to the majority of people (like opium) to loot them to their bone marrows 3) God has not created man but man has created God. But, the author here tries to analyse that the arguments of the atheists' (or rationalists') against God and religion are based on some erroneous conceptions in which the modern scientists do not agree with and hence a world without God is not justifiable. What we need essentially is not banishment of God, but to set up religion and God by adopting scientific point of view, on the consideration that, as there is only one God in the whole Universe, as God has no time, place or any concrete existence, hence all those that contain in the scriptures cannot be acceptable. Only those which are common to all, only those which have no relation with time or place or any physical phenomenon can be considered as the core of all religions. Those which are uncommon will also not to be rejected; they will go to the domain of culture, to the domain of personal freedom, to be observed without harming the rights of others as we wear our dress on our own choice, as one designs his/her haircut as he/she likes.

Objectives of the study:

A man of scientific point of view is a man free from all kinds of fanaticism. What he adheres to is truth, not to any kinds of pre-occupations, traditions or any kind of selfish narrow minded motive. Being only a seeker of God, this author is also in constant endeavour to find out the truth about God. In the first attempt of this process, he undertook the study of the books about God and the study resulted as a failure to conceive about a clear-cut idea about God. But the attempt cannot be considered as a total failure because, in some places, in all the scriptures, there is a place for God which is common to all and to which, the modern updated study of pure science has also shown some similarities.

At the same time, at our modern and post modern time, there comes a new class of rationalist thinkers who do not accept anything that cannot be proved. They are not on the way to think that there is also a world of reality which cannot be proved in the laboratory of science. Therefore, they are atheists and they are on the way of considering a world totally devoid of God and religion. Some of them go even to the point of nihilism and consider that there is no other way to save our world but banishing God and religion from the world altogether.

Therefore, the author here makes an attempt to:

1. Refute the allegations of the atheists.
2. Find out the real definition of God and religion.
3. Cite what modern science says about God and religion.
4. Have a short discussion about *Eka Śaraṇa Hari Nāma Dharm* on the light of these findings.

The allegations of the atheists:

1. No reliable proof is yet established on the existence of God. Hence, the idea of God itself is a fallacy¹.
2. There are three causes on the belief in the existence of God: 1) ignorance 2) intellectual inability and 3) a kind of strategy of the rich and the cunning people to loot the general ignorant people².
3. "Religion is based, I think, primarily and mainly upon fear. It is partly the terror of the unknown, and partly, ... the wish to feel that you have a kind of elder brother who will stand by you on all your troubles and disputes. Fear is the basis of the whole thing—fear of mysteries, fear of defeat, fear of

death. Fear is the parent of cruelty, and therefore, it is no wonder if cruelty and religion have gone hand in hand”³.

4. “Religion is the sigh of the oppressed creature, the sentiment of a heartless world, and the soul of a soulless condition, it is the opium of the people.”⁴
5. “If we go back to the beginning of things, we shall always find that ignorance and fear created the gods; that imagination, rapture and deception embellished them, that darkness worships them, that custom spares them; and that tyranny favours them in order to profit from the blindness of the men”⁵
6. God is that silent killer who has been killing thousands of innocent women, children and men in several kinds of natural calamities that occur ages after ages.^{6,7}
7. The populace is kept in oblivion in the name of God. They were kept unknown about the cause of social inequality. The ruling class do not want that the general people can find out (by removing the veil of superstitions) that the cause of their dismal fate is not destiny, nor the aftermath of their previous life, nor it is an activity of the gods in heaven. They want that the people should not come out to the streets to wipe out these irregularities. Rather, they should go to the temples, to the churches, to the mosques; pray there, kneel there, prostrate there and pour out streams of tears in prayers or *dowa*, consider their fates as gods’ test on them and expect remedy from them, not from the ruling class.^{8,9}

Refuting these allegations:

Before going to the main points of this section, the author would like to state that, as a simple reader and a man of less introspection, these refutations may seem too hollow even to the consideration of the author himself. But, the basis on which these arguments are set up are to be found in the arguments themselves and on the rejection or granting them, the author first solicits the readers and the opponents to ask their own rational mind first and then go to the basis which are put before them for consideration. First of all, the author totally agrees that religion or religious thoughts are set up in the primitive minds of the people from the observation of nature, the fear that took place in their primitive minds from nature and sometimes from the infinite grace of nature that enabled to maintain their existence. This is the origin of religion. But when one tries to establish that the modern religions like Hinduism, Jainism, Buddhism, Christianity, Islamism etc. also originate from the same childish thoughts of the ancient people, it is hard to believe. The age of all these religions can be counted from 1500 to 5000 years. All these religions are propagated by some great human souls, great men of high introspection and they had to sacrifice immensely, suffer a lot for going against the rampant traditions and all these religions were originally meant to redeem mankind from the troubles of living a life and to uplift the human race to the state of perfect bliss and happiness. The prophets of these religions were not the agents of the ruling class, nor were they cunning or deceitful persons to loot people to the core. All these religions have a deeply rooted basis which cannot be blown away by a single puff of air.

Secondly, it is not controversial at all that religion is a kind of social custom created by men (because the preachers were also men). God is also a discovery of human mind (not a creation or invention if one thinks that way). This point will be clarified later on.

Thirdly, the author has no objection to admit that religion has many harmful effects in human society. In the several criticisms, like the criticism of Karl Marx, Bertrand Russell, Baron d’Holbach etc. the author has no objection at all. Rather, the author can also mention several such other allegations against religion which are more heinous, more reproachable and more degenerative.

But, the author's point is that one cannot blame religion itself for these harmful effects. The blemish lies not in religion, it lies on the people who had distorted religions and began to utilize them for their selfish ends. If one can blame religion for these harmful effects, one can blame science also in the same manner. (This world is aged about 500 crores of years, life came to the earth some 200 crores of years ago, human like creatures are found in the earth some lakhs of years ago. Traces of human civilization can also be found some 7000 to 8000 years ago. But one can observe that within a span of some 200/250 years only, science has turned the world to a barren land, a place completely non-inhabitable not only to human beings but also to any living being of the world.) The atheists are contemplating that world will get rid of all troubles if only we wipe out religion from our world. But, can it be possible? Who has destroyed our world? Science or religion? The real answer is none. The destroyers are those people who are utilizing science and religion for their selfish ends.

Fourthly, it is erroneous to say that anything that cannot be proved in the laboratories or in any other kinds of scientific instruments is false. Prominent scientists of the world are on the way to accept that God exists. This point will be clarified later on.

Fifthly, it is completely right that religion originates from ignorance and fear about natural phenomena. But to accept a view like the third cause of belief in existence of God is nothing but a kind of strategy of the rich and cunning people to cheat the general ignorant people is a wrong conclusion. It will make the preachers like Jesus Christ, Muhammad, Ancient Vedic Saints and great men like Vivekananda, Arovindo, Mahatma Gandhi, Śaṅkaradeva etc. as either fools or legendary people.

Sixthly, the middle age of human civilization can be considered as a bottleneck. It is erroneous to criticise religion on the basis of its state in the middle age. The present state of all religions is in a direction of assimilation. There will come a day when we will be able to see the unity in diversity. The spread of knowledge has been cleansing all religions with the help of science. Hence, it is sure that religion will reach its declared aim one day.

The author does not blame the atheists for these allegations against religion. It is because, they consider religion as the people believe about it or as the dictionaries state about the definition of religion. But, this state of religion is only a distorted state. (A close study on the main scriptures of all religions will make it clear that there is vast difference between the religion stated in the scriptures and the religion observed by people. And, in many religions, especially in Hinduism, there are several interpolations in the scriptures and there are also many bogus books written by some selfish people, who without giving their own names as the authors, ascribe these books in the name of some prominent preachers or saints.) But, even if the main scripture are to be considered as authentic pure knowledge, they are not God's words. They are knowledge oozed out from some transcendental feelings of some great thinkers or preachers. (These are not God's words because God is one in the whole universe, hence, He cannot say differently in different scriptures. All those words that are ascribed to God are not the same in all the scriptures). To find out the real meaning of religion, one must have a very close study on the scriptures of all the religions, go to the purport of the sayings and find the HCF (Highest Common Factor) of all religions and then to test it again in the laboratory of theoretical science. Pure religion (theoretical, that is, philosophy of religion) and pure science (theoretical science) are never harmful but their application may harm people if they are applied for selfish ends.

The definition of God and religion:

The readers may not agree with the author on the definitions given by him on God and religion. These

are the author's own definitions. Many citations may be put forward to justify the definitions. But the author would like to evade them because all these definitions may not fit exactly with any other of them.

According to the author:

Religion is the set of all natural and universal laws that are governing and maintaining the vast universe, the violation of which cause destruction sooner or later. God is the inventor and maintainer of these principles. (c.f. Stephen Hawking's definition on God)

Theism: What Science say about it?

The notion of asserting Gods' existence on what is unknown or on the inability of cognition is very ancient. As far as human ability of understanding things about nature increases, God's existence has also been decreasing inversely in the same proportion. Some scientists are now going to declare that there are scarcely a few gaps left to fill by God's paste. But, it seems to the author that mankind is yet far and far away from it. But, even then, the author does not believe that there will come a day when God will totally be ousted from our universe. What the author believes that God will definitely be discovered by the scientists before filling up all the gaps. The dawn has already arrived. God is not those gaps, but God will be discovered as the only real entity, the Absolute, who has no relation with time, place, energy, matter etc. God is, however, perceived by the scientists not as perceived by the atheists or by the so called religious people. God is perceived as the definition of God already stated. It can be assumed that the day is coming when all atheists, theists, science and religion will merge into a single field, the place of unity, prosperity and perpetual sustenance of the world.

Here are some quotations on what the prominent scientists say about God:

1. Albert Einstein:

"...But there is a third stage of religious experience which belongs to all of them, even though it is rarely found in a pure form: I shall call it cosmic religious feeling. It is very difficult to elucidate this feeling to anyone who is entirely without it, especially as there is no anthropomorphic conception of God corresponding to it."

The individual feels the futility of human desires and aims and the sublimity and marvelous order which reveal themselves both in nature and in the world of thought. Individual existence impresses him as a sort of prison and he wants to experience the universe as a single significant whole. The beginnings of cosmic religious feeling already appear at an early stage of development, e.g., in many of the Psalms of David and in some of the Prophets. Buddhism, as we have learned especially from the wonderful writings of Schopenhauer, contains a much stronger element of this."

The religious geniuses of all ages have been distinguished by this kind of religious feeling, which knows no dogma and no God conceived in man's image; so that there can be no church whose central teachings are based on it. Hence it is precisely among the heretics of every age that we find men who were filled with this highest kind of religious feeling and were in many cases regarded by their contemporaries as atheists, sometimes also as saints. Looked at in this light, men like Democritus, Francis of Assisi, and Spinoza are closely akin to one another."

How can cosmic religious feeling be communicated from one person to another, if it can give rise to no definite notion of a God and no theology? In my view, it is the most important function of art and science to awaken this feeling and keep it alive in those who are receptive to it."¹⁰

“I cannot conceive of a genuine scientist without the profound faith. The situation can be expressed by an image: science without religion is lame, religion without science is blind.”¹¹

“This firm belief (in the intelligibility of the world), a belief bound up with deep religious feeling in a superior mind that reveals itself in the world of experience, represents my conception of God. In common parlance, this may be described as pantheistic (Spinoza)”¹²

2. Stephen Hawking

“I use the word “God” in an impersonal sense, like Einstein did, for the laws of nature, so knowing the mind of God is knowing the laws of nature. My prediction is that we will know the mind of God by the end of this century.”¹³

3. Heisenberg

“Science points to some Central Design, some purpose in the Universe”¹⁴

4. E.F. Schumacher

“The modern experiment to live without religion has failed”¹⁵

5. A.N. Whitehead

“The future of civilization depends on the degree to which we can balance the force of science and religion.”¹⁶

6. D.S Kothari

“It has been my belief from the student days (ever since I read the Gita, (Annie Besant’s translation), that the foundations of relativity and quantum theory provide highly suggestive analogies and idea for appreciation and understanding Indian spiritual thought. This has been, of course, immensely reinforced by the inspiring writings of Einstein, Bohr, Schroedinger, Heisenberg, Wigner and others. Also for a quest of the foundations of modern physics Indian philosophical thought can be very stimulating a suggestive.”¹⁷

“Einstein remarked ‘the most incomprehensible thing about the universe is that it is comprehensible’. Perhaps even more incomprehensible it is that the mind can comprehend another mind, though the two are totally isolated, separate from each other. How does it becomes possible that we understand one another, at any rate in some measure, whether we talk about the external world or about ourselves? Is it that in reality there are not many minds, but only One Mind? This is the assertion of Vedanta.”¹⁸

“Mind is not a thing in the sense in which we speak of mind: it stands for thoughts, consciousness, perception, memories, reasoning, feeling, emotions, willing and so on. Mind stand for self, for soul.”¹⁹

7. Cyril Hinshewood:

“To deny the reality of the inner world is a flat negation of all that is immediate in existence, to minimize its significance is to depreciate the very purpose of living, and to explain it away as a product of natural selection is a plain fallacy.”²⁰

8. Wigner:

“There are two kinds of reality or existence—the existence of my consciousness and the reality of existence of everything else.”²¹

“The measurement is not completed until its result enters our consciousness...(this) last step is, at the present state of our knowledge, shrouded in mystery, and no explanation is given for it so far in terms of quantum mechanics, or in terms of any other theory”²²

9. Schroedinger:

“A hundred years ago, perhaps another man sat on this spot...like you, he was begotten of man and born of woman. He felt pain and grief as you do. Was he someone else? Was it not you yourself? What is this

self of yours? ... What clearly intelligible scientific meaning can this ‘someone else’ really have? ...looking and thinking in that manner you may suddenly come to see, in a flash, the profound rightness of the basic conviction in Vedanta...that sacred mystic formula which is yet really so simple and so clear: *Tat tvam asi*, this is you. Or, again, in such words as ‘I am in the east and in the west, I am below and above, I am this whole world’²³

10. Newton:

“There are two books of God, one is the Holy Bible and the other the Book of Nature which is written in the language of mathematics.”

11. Mahatma Gandhi:

“To see the universal and all pervading Truth face to face one must be able to love the merest of creatures as oneself...I must reduce myself to zero. So long a man does not of his free will put himself last among his fellow creatures, there is no salvation for him, *Ahimsā* is the farthest limit of humility.”

12. C.G. Yung :

“Religious experience is the absolute. You can say that you have never had such an experience and your opponent will say, ‘Sorry, I have’.”²⁴

13. M. Delbruck,

“Thus, even if we learn to speak about consciousness as an emergent property of nerve-nets, even if we learn to understand the process that lead to abstraction, reasoning and language, still any such development presupposes a notion of truth that is prior to all these efforts and cannot be conceived as an emergent property of it, an emergent property of a biological evolution. Our conviction of the truth of the sentence, ‘the number of prime numbers is infinite’, must be independent of nerve-nets and evolution, if truth is to be a meaningful word at all.”²⁵

14. B. J. Carr and M.J. Reec

“It can be noticed for quite some time that there are certain ‘coincidences’ among the physical constants. It seems that were it not for those apparent ‘coincidences’ there would be no life, no man on the earth, in fact there would be no earth, in fact there would be no earth.”²⁶

15. J.C. Eccles

“The self conscious mind is a self subsistent entity that is actively engaged in reading out from the multifarious activities of the neuronal machinery of cerebral cortex according to its attention and interest, and it integrates this selection to give the unity of conscious experience of moment to moment. It also acts back in a selective manner on the neuronal machinery. Thus it is proposed that the self conscious mind exercises a superior interpretative and controlling role upon the neuronal events by virtue of a two way interaction between World I and World II, that is, the External World and the Internal World...”²⁷

In his book, *Atom and Self*, Meghnad Saha Medal Lecture, 1978 Scientist D. D. Kothari, F.N.A. has cited 10 arguments in support of God’s existence. They are summed up as follows:

Dr. Kothari has started the arguments by saying—

“At this point, there may arise the doubt that if the objectivity of science excludes totally the ‘I’ from it how could science tell us anything at all about the ‘I’, and the nature of the self? The answer is: It can. How ?”

1. Even if we speak about consciousness as an emergent property of nerve-nets, still any such development presupposes a notion of truth that is prior to all these efforts and it cannot be considered as an emergent property of nerve-nets.
2. Psychology and neuronal science can be used to explore the objective aspects of mind and self.
3. Our understanding of self gets richer along with our knowledge of mathematics, physics and neuronal networks. As consciousness enters into quantum mechanics, a deeper study of yoga and mystic experience may reveal some reciprocal aspects about mind or self.
4. The study of brain-mind interaction, from brain to mind and mind to brain may be given importance with increasing use of sophisticated techniques and refinements.
5. As the brain is subject to the laws of physics, the freedom exercised by the mind in brain-mind interaction can take place only within the confines permitted by indeterminacy which is an integral feature of quantum mechanics.
6. There are certain coincidences among the physical constants without which no life could have been possible on the earth.
7. Psychosomatic medicine is directly related to brain-mind interaction.
8. Human mind is guided. There could have been no moral responsibility if it had not been guided. It has the freedom to link itself with the great “Central Design of the Universe’ to realize ultimately the Kaivalya state of being.
9. The complementarities of dynamics and thermodynamics, in the sense of Bohr-Heisenberg complementarity principle, demonstrated by Prigogine has a highly suggestive analogy to the dual aspects of the brain-mind manifestation, namely determinism and free will.
10. It is important to examine how compelling are the arguments, derived from ‘incompleteness’. ‘Incompleteness’ of mathematics and fundamental physics require the existence of a *reality outside science*.²⁸

The Context of the *Eka Śaraṇa Hari Nāma Dharma*:

The *Eka Śaraṇa Hari Nāma Dharma*, as the name implies is a refined form of Hinduism. It is propagated by Śrīmanta Śaṅkaradeva (1449-1568) who was born in Nagaon, Assam. The religion has been preserved by the Sattras for more than 500 years. But, even in the maintenance of the *sattrādhikārs* of Assam, the religion came under the influence of the traditional medieval Hindu cults and thereby it has been adulterated to a great extent. However during the eve of the twentieth century, many prominent and revolutionary thinkers and literate persons like Lakshminath Bezbaruah, Ramakanta Muktiar, Haladhar Bhuyan, Gopika Ballabh Goswami, Dambarudhar Baruah, Bhuban Chandra Bhuyan, Rameswar Baruah, Dimbeswar Neog, Maheswar Neog, etc. have brought the pure form of the religion preached by the saint and as a result Śrīmanta Śaṅkaradeva Sangha has been formed by a constellation of these revolutionary thinkers in the year 1930. This organization is now marching forward to complete the centenary in the year 2030. It has now proved as the largest religio-cultural non political organisation of north east India consisting of more than lakhs of its followers and spreading its branches in almost all the states of North East India and also in Delhi, West Bengal, Odissa, America and London.

The religion is a theist one and yet it has nothing in it against which the atheists are criticising the religions of the world. It is purely based on scientific point of view although it retains the worship of Lord Kṛṣṇa and Lord Rāma as the representative of the Absolute God.

A few points on its characteristics are mentioned as follows:

1. In the *Eka Śaraṇa Hari Nāma Dharma*, the deity is only Lord Kṛṣṇa as the representative of the Absolute or *Nirguṇa Brahma*. Worship of any other deity but Lord Kṛṣṇa is strictly prohibited.
2. Idol worship is strictly prohibited. The idol of Lord Kṛṣṇa is also not worshipped. Instead of His idol, His names, activities, the preacher (Śrīmanta Śaṅkaradeva) and His ardent devotees are considered as the chief object of worship. (But idol of the preacher is also not allowed for worshipping)
3. Instead of His idol, the *Bhāgavata-purāṇa*, the masterpiece of the *Eka Śaraṇa Hari Nāma Dharma*, or the *Guṇamālā*, a concise edition of the *Bhāgavata-purāṇa*, is placed in the altar.
4. Instead of the temple, there is *nāmghar* or *sattra* where the devotees gather to worship and discuss about Him.
5. The intermediary class, the priests are completely abandoned in the *Eka Śaraṇa Hari Nāma Dharma*.
6. The female consort of Lord Kṛṣṇa is also given no importance in this cult.
7. The religion is very simple because it never allows any pilgrimage or any kind of activity prescribed by the priests. It is a religion of the householders, a religion that can be followed by any living being born in the soil of earth²⁹.
8. In this religion only the names of Lord Kṛṣṇa are considered sufficient for all kinds of sacraments.

Conclusion:

The author would like to conclude by reiterating Einstein's lines *Religion without Science is blind*, that Hinduism has been set up in its pure form by Śrīmanta Śaṅkaradeva with the help of Science (more than 500 years ago, before it was said by Einstein). The author does not support to send religion to exile, because it also contains many invaluable gems for mankind. Religion requires purification, Hinduism is already purified, and other religions should also be purified by following Einstein's dictum. And then, religion should also be considered as the other leg of human evolution because *Science without Religion is lame*. We have already witnessed that the inventions of the scientists, without spiritual consciousness has turned our sole earth to a devastated barren land, a desert. (The author would like to mention the most invaluable factory created by God, the tree, which has been creating vital air (O₂) by absorbing mortal air (CO₂) without creating any bye-product, any pollution, any costs; but our scientists cannot produce anything, any factory which does not have any negative effects.)

¹ Dr. Mahananda Pathak, "Bijnanar dristit Iswar" published in *Iswar Biswas Jukti Aru Bigyan*,(ed.) Nitul Changmai, Bandhav, Panbajar, Guwahati, (2021) p. 54

² "Iswar" by Hahul Sangkrityan

³ Bertrand Russell, "Why I Am Not a Christian"

⁴ Marx, Karl. [1843] 1970. "[Introduction](#)." *A Contribution to the Critique of Hegel's Philosophy of Right*, translated by A. Jolin and J. O'Malley, edited by J. O'Malley. Cambridge University Press.

⁵ Baron d'Holbach, *System of Nature* (1770)

⁶ Bhargav Borthakur, "Iswar, Dharma aru Noitikata" published in *Iswar Biswas Jukti Aru Bigyan*,(ed.) Nitul Changmai, Bandhav, Panbajar, Guwahati, (2021) p. 177

⁷ "Iswar" by Hahul Sangkrityan

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