

Essay

Some Reflections on God and Science

Himangsu S. Pal *

ABSTRACT

Perhaps this is the greatest irony in the whole history of our human civilization so far: science has explained that very God whose existence it has vehemently denied. If God does not exist, then those scientists who have given us special theory of relativity should not be called proper scientists at all. And if God does not exist, then special theory of relativity is not a proper science at all; it is simply a pseudo-science, something like astrology. To call it a science is an insult to human reason and understanding.

Key Words: GOD, science, special theory of relativity, existence, spaceless, timeless, immortality.

1. Some Reflections on God and Science

Tegmark proposed what he calls "the ultimate ensemble theory" in which all universes that mathematically exist also physically exist (Tegmark, 1997). By "mathematical existence," Tegmark means "freedom from contradiction." So, universes cannot contain square circles, but anything that does not break a rule of logic exists in some universe."

So here we see that as per Tegmark (1997) mathematical existence implies physical existence. From the following equation of special theory of relativity:

$$t^1 = t (1 - v^2/c^2)^{1/2} \quad (1)$$

one can see that if one can move with the speed of light, then he will be immortal. Because when $v = c$, then for any value of t , value of t^1 will always be zero. Even if value of t is an eternity, till then value of t^1 will be zero. So in one frame of reference whole of eternity may pass, but in another frame of reference not a single moment will elapse. Whoever will be in this second reference frame, will be immortal. Even in the whole time span of an eternity, he will not be older by a single second. So from this equation we see that immortality has got mathematical existence. But as per Tegmark (1997) mathematical existence implies physical existence. Therefore we can conclude that immortality has got physical existence also. This means that there is an immortal being in this universe.

In his article "Ten Things Wrong with Cosmological Creationism" Richard Carrier (2000) has written: "When we posit a god, we are left with almost no predicted observations - theism does not predict any physical feature of the universe that we can check."

But this is definitely not true. First of all one will have to decide whose God one is considering. Is it Abraham's God? Is it Jacob's God? Or is it mystic-philosopher's God? If it is mystic-philosopher's God, then definitely some physical features of the universe can be

* Correspondence: Himangsu S. Pal E-Mail: sekharpal@rediffmail.com

predicted that can be checked and verified by the scientists. Philosopher's God is beyond good and evil, one, all pervading, spaceless, timeless, changeless, immortal, etc. Since God is all pervading and spaceless at the same time, so volume of the entire universe must have to be zero. Otherwise, how can that God be spaceless? So, this is one prediction that can be made. The next prediction that can also be made is this: existence of a spaceless, timeless being in this universe implies the relativity of space and time. I have written a book in Bengali (published in 2003) in which I have shown in some great details as to how a spaceless, timeless God implies the relativity of space and time. And this last prediction has already been found to be correct. Since God is one and since everything in this universe has sprung from that one God, then everything in this universe must be ultimately reducible to one thing. This is another prediction that can be made.

Another prediction that comes to my mind is this: God is said to be timeless. If God is really there and if that God is timeless, then there is some sort of timelessness in this universe. For timelessness to be there, time must have to be unreal by some means or other. So God-theory predicts that time must have to be unreal by some means or other. And science has shown that it is just the case. At the speed of light time becomes unreal. If there is no apparent reason for time becoming unreal, there is at least one reason as to why it should be. And that reason is God's timelessness.

One more prediction: God is said to be immortal. So here God-theory predicts that immortality must be found to be written somewhere, in some scientific theory or law or equation. Here also we find that science has not betrayed us. From the equation of special theory of relativity (1) we can see that if one can move with the speed of light, then he will be immortal.

Now one question will definitely arise here. Is deathlessness same as timelessness? Is there no difference? This question arises because I have used the same equation for showing as to how one can be timeless as well as immortal. The answer to this question will be a very big YES. Death means some sort of change. I am very much alive at this moment. But at the very next moment I may die. But in a timeless world this very next moment will never come. So a timeless being can never die.

So, it is not true that God-theory does not predict any physical feature of the universe that we can check. As per the definition of a good scientific theory given by Karl Popper, God-theory can be considered to be a very good scientific theory. It can predict something that can be checked and verified, and so it can also be falsified. Only those who are heavily prejudiced against God will decline to admit it.

Scientist Victor J. Stenger (1999) has written: "Mystics state that their experience of oneness with God and the universe cannot be described in scientific terms. The more rational statement is that this experience is all in their heads."

But the problem is that if this God is in mystics' heads only and not in the outside world, then whatever predictions can be made from God-theory, if at all correct, should be correct in their heads only, and not in the outside world. But since some of these predictions have already been found to be correct in the outside world, then the more rational statement is that this God is in the outside world and not in mystics' heads only. Or, it may be that, these mystics' heads

are so very big that, like God, the entire outside world is also in their heads. That is why predictions made from God-theory have been found to be correct in the outside world. In that case mystics' heads must be as big as the universe itself.

Generally two things are claimed about science:

- a) Science always deals with something that is real, and not with something that is unreal, imaginary. It is in man's power imagining anything and everything, and actually he has imagined so many things, so many worlds, and so many beings. But it is not the job of science to prove that all these imagined things, imagined worlds, imagined beings are as real as this world.
- b) Only science, and no other discipline, can give us the true picture of reality.

Keeping these two claims about science in our mind let us proceed further to see what conclusion can be drawn from the equation of special theory of relativity (1). From this equation we have already seen that if one can move with the speed of light, then he will live eternally. So we see that here science has dealt with the idea of immortality, and that it has also shown as to how that immortality can be attained. But if the claim about science that it only deals with what is real is true, then we must conclude that like change and mortality, immortality is also a real feature of this universe. Otherwise, why has science dealt with that? But immortality can be a real feature of this universe if, and only if, there is at least one immortal being in this universe. So the presence of the above equation in a scientific theory clearly indicates that there is at least one immortal being in this universe.

But if one is loathe admitting the existence of God, then one will have to admit that while in most of the cases science deals with something that is real, sometimes it also deals with something that is unreal, imaginary, and untrue. In that case one will also have to abandon the claim that only science can give us the true picture of reality. In equation (1) science has created an impression that attaining immortality is not impossibility whereas actually no one can be immortal. So here science has simply baffled us, confused us, misled us. And if we are allowed to use a very bad term here – I hope we will be pardoned for that - then we can even say that by showing that it is possible to be immortal, science has given us a very nice and beautiful bluff. Like so many religious bluffs, it is also a bluff, in this case given by science itself.

So the gist of the whole matter is simply this the below. Science cannot hold the following two propositions as true simultaneously:

- 1) God, or, any other immortal being, does not exist,
- 2) Only science can give us the true picture of reality.

If any one of the above two propositions is true, then the other one must be false.

Mystics who have claimed that they have direct experience of God have repeatedly and unanimously told us one thing: time is unreal. If one claims that God does not exist and that mystical experience is nothing but a mere hallucination, then he must show that mystics were

wrong in holding that time was unreal. Here common sense says that to do this one must have to show that time is not unreal and that in no way can it be unreal. But here science has done just the opposite; it has shown as to how and when time will become unreal. But to show that mystical experience is nothing but a hallucination, one must have to show that mystics' view regarding time was completely mistaken. As science has miserably failed to do that, so by what kind of logic is it established that mystical experience is a hallucination? If mystical experience can no longer be discarded as a mere hallucination, then by what kind of logic is it established that God does not exist?

When man did not know that time could be unreal his labeling of mystical experience as a hallucination was fully justified, logical and reasonable. But once it has dawned on him that at the speed of light time could become unreal, his discarding mystical experience as a hallucination is totally unjustified, illogical and unreasonable. And, it is unscientific also. As per definition a hallucination is a sensory perception without a source in the external world. When the mystic says that time is unreal, he is definitely in touch with some state where time is unreal. If he were not, he would not have said time was unreal. But he wrongly and erroneously thinks - and believes also - that this timeless state is in the real, external world. But if mystical experience is nothing but a hallucination, then as per its definition this timeless state cannot be in the real world.

If this timeless state is in the real world, then mystical experience is not a hallucination. And if mystical experience is not a hallucination, then it cannot be said that God does not exist. But since atheists and scientists claim that God does not exist, then mystical experience must have to be a hallucination. So, if necessary, then even by hook or crook, it will have to be established that mystical experience is nothing but a hallucination. For that it must have to be ensured that this timeless state can never be in the external world. And for that, it must further have to be ensured that time can never be unreal in the external world. But we find that this last condition is not fulfilled at all. It is not fulfilled because science has shown that at the speed of light time becomes unreal. Since time can also be unreal in the external world, then there is every possibility that this timeless state is in the external world. And if this timeless state is in the external world, then mystical experience cannot be called a hallucination. And if mystical experience is not a hallucination, then God is real.

Science is supposed to deal with something that is real, that is existent, that is of this world, and not with something that is unreal, imaginary, and non-existent. If God does not exist, then that God is a fictitious, imaginary Being. Whatever has been said about that imaginary God cannot be true, cannot be real. If God does not exist, then there is no one in this universe about whom it can be said that He is immortal, spaceless, timeless, all pervading etc. So, if God does not exist, then the terms immortality, spacelessness, timelessness etc. will have no meaning at all. These are all imaginary concepts attributed to some imaginary Being. Then why will science, which is supposed to be concerned with only what is real, what is existent, what is of this world, show that all these imaginary concepts have got some sort of scientific explanation? Why will science show that if one can move with the speed of light, then one can be immortal, timeless, etc.? If God is also not real, then how do those imaginary concepts attributed to that imaginary being somehow become part of a real world by being explained scientifically?

Has science ever been found to give proof for the existence of any non-real, imaginary thing? Has science ever been found to give proof for the existence of any non-real, imaginary being? Has science ever been found to offer explanation for the occurrence of any imaginary event? Is science famous for doing all these things? Has science proved that ghosts are real? Has science proved that there is a place called heaven where every human being goes after his or her death? Does science think that real human blood can come out of the wounds of a stone or wooden Jesus? Can one give any single instance where science has supported any single human superstition or folly? If science has never been found to give proof for any single imaginary thing or being and if science has never been found to offer explanation for any single imaginary event, then why is it that it has on its own given explanation for these imaginary concepts? Why is there an exception here at all? What is the reason behind this? What does it want to make us understand by giving scientific explanation to these imaginary concepts? Does it want to make us understand that these are not imaginary concepts at all? Does it want to make us understand that these are real concepts having meaning and significance in some real context in a real world? Does it want to make us understand God is real?

Perhaps this is the greatest irony in the whole history of our human civilization so far: science has explained that very God whose existence it has vehemently denied. If God does not exist, then those scientists who have given us special theory of relativity should not be called proper scientists at all. And if God does not exist, then special theory of relativity is not a proper science at all; it is simply a pseudo-science, something like astrology. To call it a science is an insult to human reason and understanding.

2. Some Responses I Received

“The problem is that in order for this equation to be true you have to be talking about a material object (being). When $v=c$ you are saying that the object is going the speed of light. This can't happen as the mass becomes infinite at c . In short you would turn into your own black hole. Furthermore, it would take an infinite amount of energy to get to c . All this is impossible. Now if you are talking about an immaterial being, then none of the equation applies.”

“An immortal being in literature can usually do stuff. The type of immortality described here consists of existence as a popsicle, frozen in time. This would be no fun at all!”

“OK: a timeless being can't do anything because events happen in time. Sure you'd be immortal at the speed of light, because time would be frozen for you. Behold the incredible frozen God!”

“Predictions only count if, well, they are made in advance of the finding. Already knowing the finding of relativity theory and then claiming that your version of God predicts them is, if not delusional, at least cheating.”

“Plus I don't see any good reason to accept Tegmark's proposition that mathematical possibility implies physical existence anyway. With only one universe to observe we can't make ANY substantial claims about the probability of any of its properties. We have no way

then will he please take the trouble to give us the name(s) of the scientific theory/theories of which these are the findings? If he cannot, then he should admit that he has brought a false and baseless charge against me, for which he should apologize. Actually, by showing that these two predictions can also be made from God-theory, I have taken a very great risk. Because if they do not come true, then one day God-theory will eventually be falsified. And then there will be no hope left for us.

But still I think there will be some hopes left. At least what the Russian scientist Andrei Linde has said to Tim Folger (2008) in a completely different context raises some hopes in us. Let us first see what he has actually said:

“When I ask Linde whether physicists will ever be able to prove that the multiverse is real, he has a simple answer. “Nothing else fits the data,” he tells me. “We don’t have any alternative explanation for the dark energy; we don’t have any alternative explanation for the smallness of the mass of the electron; we don’t have any alternative explanation for many properties of particles.

“What I am saying is, look at it with open eyes. These are experimental facts, and these facts fit one theory: the multiverse theory. They do not fit any other theory so far. I’m not saying these properties necessarily imply the multiverse theory is right, but you asked me if there is any experimental evidence, and the answer is yes. It was Arthur Conan Doyle who said, ‘When you have eliminated the impossible, whatever remains, however improbable, must be the truth.’”

So, here lies the hope. First, eliminate all the impossible theories. Then the theory that remains, even if improbable, must be the truth.

As per the scientists God does not exist, because so far there is no proof for His existence, and perhaps there will never be any. But it is also true that man believes in God. So, it is a fact that man believes in God in spite of the fact that there is no God. This fact also requires some sort of explanation. Some explanations have been offered so far by some eminent thinkers and philosophers, but none of these theories are adequate enough to explain certain aspects of that imaginary God. So it can be said that all their theories, all their hypotheses are failed theories, failed hypotheses.

If God does not exist, then God did not create man, instead man has created God. So it is quite expected that he will create that God in such a way that He can satisfy all his needs. Man will definitely not create a God who is not merciful. He will definitely not create a God who is not immortal, because a mortal God cannot bestow immortality on others. For that purpose God Himself must have to be immortal. These points are easily understood. So we can understand why man-created God is benevolent, merciful, all-loving, all powerful, immortal, etc. & etc. What about that God who is spaceless and timeless? Why was it necessary to imagine that God as such? What are the specific needs of man that can only be met by a spaceless, timeless God? If God did not have these attributes, then what would have been lost to man? A real God might have to have these attributes; there might be some philosophical justifications for that. But why should an imaginary God? **Does anybody have any answer?** Then what about Hindu’s Brahma who is indifferent to man’s sorrows and sufferings? What about that Brahma who is without any qualities, without any attributes (Nirguna Brahma)? A Nirguna

Brahma cannot have benevolence even, so He cannot even do any single benevolent act. So what purpose does such a Brahma serve to man? Man can easily do without Him. And so, why in the first place will he take the trouble on him to create such a Brahma, and then declare that He doesn't care for us? All such queries remain unanswered, unexplained. So all these theories, all these hypotheses so far offered to explain man's belief in God are impossible theories, impossible hypotheses. So, according to Konan Doyle, they need to be eliminated mercilessly. Therefore the only theory that ultimately remains is the correct theory. The theory that simply says: Man believes in God, because there is a God.

If our atheist and scientist friends are not satisfied at all with this theory, then they are always at liberty to offer their own theory here. But whatever new theory they are going to offer, that theory must possess one essential property that none of their old theories had possessed so far. It must have the capability of giving a satisfactory answer to our long-standing and so far unresolved question: **WHY SHOULD AN IMAGINARY GOD HAVE TO BE SPACELESS, TIMELESS AT ALL? TO SATISFY WHAT BASIC NEEDS OF MAN WAS HE COMPELLED TO CREATE A GOD WITH SUCH PARTICULAR ATTRIBUTES?** If they cannot offer any such theory, then they should keep their mouth shut and accept our theory as the only correct theory here: **MAN BELIEVES IN GOD, BECAUSE THERE IS A GOD. THE GOD WE BELIEVE IN IS A REAL GOD. AND A REAL GOD MUST HAVE TO BE SPACELESS, TIMELESS, AS OTHERWISE HE WILL BE BOUND BY SPACE-TIME.**

References:

Richard Carrier (2000), Ten Things Wrong with Cosmological Creationism. http://www.infidels.org/library/modern/richard_carrier/ten.html

Tim Folger (2008), Science's Alternative to an Intelligent Creator: the Multiverse theory, DISCOVER Magazine, November 10, 2008.

Victor J. Stenger (1999), the Anthropic Coincidences: A Natural Explanation. The Skeptical Intelligencer, 3(3): pp. 2-17.

Max Tegmark (1997), Is "the theory of everything" merely the ultimate ensemble theory? arXiv:gr-qc/9704009v2.