

# Search for God

*By Dr Shakeel Ahmad, Tabligh Department, UK*

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Why is it that a universal and overwhelming passion or quest is associated with the entity of God, *particularly* so if such a thing does not exist? Is it also not amazing that such a quest existed independently amongst various sections of human race that lived in different parts of the world, with different languages, different ways of life and different living conditions; and that too even before any way of communication had developed between them? It must be that each of these sections acquired the ‘idea’ of existence of God independently and locally. Again an interesting question arises, does the quest for God exist just because we are intrigued about our origins and also the possibility of a ‘creator’, or is it something inherently planted in our make up as we gradually evolved from simpler to developed life forms with advancing consciousness and therefore this is how we are designed to think, and that there is some wisdom in such development?

It is interesting to note that a majority of world’s population are believers in the existence of God and that approximately three fourths of world’s population believe in some form of deity. From amongst those who are unsure about this issue or even those who do not believe, there appears to be an ongoing expression of a quest for a better understanding of this issue. All this may not be conclusive in its own right but neither is it insignificant in any manner and puts the debate in some context. We can also infer from this that proof of non-existence of God should at least be as much required if not more than the proof of existence of God. The non-believer is after all claiming what is at odds with the belief of majority of world population.

## **‘Out of sight, out of mind’**

One of the primary arguments given by a non-believer is that since God cannot be seen, heard or touched, this is strong enough a reason to believe in non-existence. However, we have definite scientific evidence about many things that exist but we cannot perceive them with our primary senses. For example an empty room is not actually devoid of any existence. In fact it is filled with air along with the composing

mixture of gases, although we cannot see, hear, smell, taste or touch any of this. It also contains radiation of various types including radio waves or even sound and light frequencies which are beyond the range of natural human perception. Yes it is true that we were not aware of such forms of existence some time ago but now it is only a matter of having the right instrument, say, a radio receiver, and it provides definite proof of such existence. We also know that certain birds and animals communicate with each other at frequencies that they can well perceive but which are beyond our perception. Thus inability to perceive something by basic human senses is hardly a proof for its non-existence. Furthermore as our senses have a very limited range of perception and are unable to comprehend anything more than just a small range of the total created existence, why should it be a surprise that, unless our senses are specially prepared, they are unable to comprehend God, who is beyond all realm of creation. After all attributes of a creator are very different from those of its creation.

### **Need of Discipline**

An individual, who sincerely believes in a God that facilitates spiritual growth by guiding us to follow a specific code of behaviour, would be required to refrain from hedonistic activities and the usual human temptations based on selfishness, passion and greed. Speaking from a psychological point of view we know that discipline is an essential requisite for growth in our intellectual as well as physical performance. Similarly discipline is also an essential requisite for growth on moral-spiritual spectrum. In spite of this well-established link between discipline and growth there is a tendency to consider the discipline requiring code of moral behaviour as interference to one's 'free living'. The case is similar to the example of a child feeling 'free' after being expelled from school due to delinquent behaviour. In the school there was continuous expectation to keep up a certain degree of discipline while out of school this may not be so. However, at the same time, there was all the possibility of the child's development through the discipline at school whilst without it there are all the chances of the child not developing to the same degree. It is the requirement to apply discipline to moral-spiritual spectrum of one's life that makes the acceptance of entity of God harder for an individual previously used to life without such discipline.

## **Intelligent design**

Looking at the subject from a pragmatic perspective, let us ask ourselves if it is possible to create something without planning and wisdom and expect it to function without problems? Both common sense and scientific experience would answer negatively to this question. The universe, which though complex and continually evolving, is an absolutely balanced system governed by natural laws that we are only beginning to understand through scientific exploration. This flawless running of universe, both micro and macro, continually obeying laws of nature, without exceptions, would in itself require the presence of not just a creator but a creator who would have put in lot of wisdom and planning in the process, an 'All-Wise Creator'.

## **Creation of Consciousness**

According to our current understanding of laws governing the process of creation, it is evident that consciousness can only be born out of consciousness and that it is not possible for consciousness to be derived from a state with no pre-existing consciousness; where living beings is a form of existence with consciousness and non-living matter is existence without consciousness. With some oversimplification this is commonly described in another way ie that life cannot be derived from non-living existence alone. The fact that various life forms with consciousness exist would thus require a 'Conscious Creator' as an ultimate source.

At this juncture we should also note that modern research about the process of evolution of life has begun to refute inferences from works of Darwin and Wallace<sup>1</sup> that imply that chance played the main role in development of life forms. This possibility has been interestingly described to be as probable as a strong wind blowing through a scrap yard leading to assemblage of a jumbo airplane.

Let us specifically look at one example, that of development of ability of speech during evolution of life. Life forms that we know preceded the human forms are known to have sounds and gestures but hardly anything resembling full speech. Then is the human stage, which shows development of language and expression ability to its complex degree of articulation that we are fully familiar with. Had 'natural

selection' based on 'chance' and 'survival of fittest' theories been solely responsible for this development we would have seen innumerable stages of gradually increasing ability of speech in various species over an immensely longer span of time between these two stages and also several stages fading out into extinction because their function of speech did not 'carry out the purpose as well as others'. On the other hand what we observe is the two very important factors. Firstly, the ability of speech appeared at a stage when consciousness had developed to the degree that the relevant life form, ie humans, had become capable of communicating complex ideas, not any earlier or later. Secondly, that this ability appeared at the time when it was to play a key role in further development of the human race that was to follow ie their psycho-moral-spiritual development.

It is now accepted by many relevant scientific circles that biological organisation of developed life forms which has derived through the evolutionary process is too sophisticated to be achieved just by chance and that some planned organisation must have played a role in this process. It thus becomes evident that if we are to believe in our own existence as intelligent beings, which can understand, explore and manipulate our environment, we must also believe in existence of a 'Conscious Creator'. On the other hand if we deny the existence of such a creator, we are in some way denying our own existence!

### **Origin of all creation**

Similarly, while tracing the creation of universe, scientists recognise the origin of universe from a state of singularity. According to scientific description of state of singularity, it did not comprise of matter but was a unified state of immense energy of some description which we do not yet understand completely. Further scientific exploration in future may enable us to begin to understand some characteristics of that state. Perhaps this will form basis of further understanding about manifestations of a 'Being' that existed even before our universe was born and which was also the ultimate source of all energy that went into creation of the universe.

According to the science of entropy, the creation of matter out of matter involves loss of energy and thus the resulting matter is slightly less than the parent one. On the

other hand creation of universe led to creation of vast amount of matter from a state of no-matter through the process nicknamed as the Big Bang. Hence, this original creation of vast amounts of mass out of state of zero mass is a process that is very unique and totally different to creation of some forms of existence from *previously existing* matter. Aristotle argued the same point philosophically that because existence of anything is not possible without a first cause, the ultimate first cause cannot itself be a created thing, as such a thing would lose energy in the 'action' of creation with an ultimate halting of the creation process while we see the process continuously going on. This concept of origin of all creation from a 'unique' source that cannot be limited in any sense of the word and therefore cannot be defined by laws of physics as we understand them in relation to our study of the *created* matter, is in line with Quranic version of the first creation, describing the first creation with a 'word' a concept also found in the Bible. The 'word' itself is not action but a vision (*of the Creator*) and a decision for the vision to happen.

We can see that on this issue, Divine scriptures, ancient Greek philosophy and our contemporary scientific understanding are in line with each other. Explanation of creation of universe by an 'Ever-present Being' who at some stage in time activated the process of creation of universe thus becomes understandable. Scientists tell us that this time is currently understood to be about 18 billion years ago.

### **Testimony of the most truthful throughout history**

Let us now look at the issue from a human perspective. Throughout history prophets have been known to be people with very high moral dignity and truthfulness by their contemporaries, both friends and foes. There is no exception to this rule. It is only after proclamation of prophethood does the opposition arise and yet again many of the opponents continue to accept the high moral stature of the prophets in spite of their own disagreement with teachings of the prophets. However strange it may appear it would not be an exaggeration to say that no other group from human societies has been as trusted as the prophets by people who knew them or know of them. Let us seriously consider this point for a moment. Which other group do we think is even nearly as trustable: governments, writers and artists, philosophers, revolutionaries, military, or the politicians? As most prophets lived in different times in history it is

also clear that they had no means of direct communication with each other. Given that they did not communicate with each other and that their unparalleled degree of truthfulness is well established, if we were to find a common theme in the teaching of all known prophets, is that not likely to be the truth? Logical inference from this is that it should be the truth. We know that all prophets talked about God as the ultimate Creator of all existence, the Master of ongoing process of life and the Master of some other form of life and a process of accountability after our worldly life ends. If the prophets *are* trustworthy then their claim should be strong evidence in support of existence of God.

### **Amazing life accounts of the prophets**

Those interested in history of religion may be familiar with the account of some of the well known prophets. How they were virtually alone at the time of their initial claim to have become recipients of God's message and people of the time turning against them. How the prophets were weaker in terms of worldly resources in comparison to the opposition which at times came in the form of mighty governments. How the prophets and their early followers had to bear suffering at the hands of opposition which reacted viciously in anger while the prophets and their followers demonstrated incredible patience, tolerance, forgiveness and grace in return. The prophets claimed that they were acting under Divine command and did not feel vengeance towards the opposition inspite of the opposition's ruthless attitude towards them. How the prophets persisted with their mission inspite of all these odds, gaining confidence again through what they claimed was 'Divine' support. And how to the amazement of many historian writers, prophets achieved what they had set for, ultimately demonstrating their truth through victory of their message.

This story of the prophets has been repeated throughout history. In each such case the prophets described their success due to special blessings of an 'All-powerful, All-gracious, Living God' rather than attributing it to their own effort. This has been the case of Adam, Lot, Noah, Abraham, Ishmael, Isaac, Confucius, Jonah, Jacob, Job, Joseph, Krishna, Moses, Aaron, David, Solomon, Buddha, Elisha, Zachariah, John, Elias, Jesus and Muhammad, to name some.

### **Wisdom of *Divine* guidance**

The process of physical evolution of life has led to development of humans as the most intelligent life form on this planet. However it should be noted that the evolutionary process has not been limited to the physical development of life forms and did not come to a stop at reaching the human stage but it has been paralleled by the evolution of Divine guidance according to need of the time and has continued to evolve. As the human societies developed an international aspect to their relations, communications, travel, trade and even exchange of people from one society to another, this was accompanied by refined Divine guidance to help people deal with complexities of this situation. This refinement is evident if we compare the degree of guidance that was given through earlier prophets as against that given through later prophets. Its study reveals teachings to create a peaceful and just society. An objective analysis reveals the profound depth and wisdom of this guidance and is acknowledged by several scholars of different domains; they accept that such guidance is not available in any worldly source of information in such a comprehensive manner. The prophets have claimed that God reveals to them this guidance.

### **Source of hidden knowledge**

Furthermore, the prophets informed us of knowledge about past, their own time and future, which was beyond the scope of knowledge acquired by scholars of that time. Quran, for example, has mentioned historical facts relating up to thousands of years before it was revealed, scientific facts about cosmology, origin of universe and the process of its development, definite presence of extra terrestrial life elsewhere in the universe, evolution of life on earth, stages of biological development of the human foetus in the womb and ways to develop functioning of human mind which psychological science is learning today. It had also prophesied about the social, political and even geographical trends of the current era. Is it not interesting that fourteen hundred years after the revelation of this message we continue to discover the truth of this knowledge.

Where does all this true knowledge come from, when on one hand it has been beyond the scope of human scholarship of the time, and on the other hand the informants are claiming that they are only messengers and not inventors of this knowledge and that this knowledge is being revealed to them by ‘God’, and to reiterate, all of this is in the context that we have no reason to doubt the truthfulness of these messengers? The claim also suggests possibility of communication between God as Creator and humans as creation. Further on does it not then make it more likely that further (verifiable) information taken from (authentic) sources of Divine revelation, which although we may not be able to quantify according to our current scientific understanding, will be proven true at some time in future as our understanding of nature develops further?

### **Evidence, witness and personal experience**

What should be very interesting for anyone in search for God is that the prophets have described their instrument to recognise the existence of God; that it is based not just on certainty of evidence and certainty of witness alone but also on certainty of experience. An example of *evidence* could be manifestations of God that we see in the shape of all creation around us and more specifically in creation with consciousness that requires pre-existing consciousness to be at source of its creation.

An example of *witness* could be what we see in the ongoing balance in laws of nature that initially led to development of all creation including the life forms and then continues to manifest in complexly interacting astronomical systems as well as the eco systems on our own planet. Circumstances that may appear to a lay eye as disastrous end up being amazingly constructive e.g. spontaneous jungle fires actually lead to regeneration of healthier soil and stronger genes in the new plant life that follows and which would not have been possible without the clearing caused by the initial fire.

Regarding *experience* the prophets tell us that their experience of God is through personal communication with God. Could it be that the instinctual human quest for God that was referred to earlier is purposefully laid in our inherent make up by the ‘Creator’ as the foundation, which if developed through individual effort, can lead us

to establish personal communication with the Creator? Such effort is taught and well demonstrated by the prophets if we study their life histories. Prophets teach that communication with God can be developed by persistent meditation and prayer whilst living a life of moral discipline including truthfulness, honesty and humility and distancing oneself from those worldly pursuits that interfere with such discipline. This we are taught creates the required 'instrument', the mind-set that is fertile to receive communication from God. Without the required instrument, a radio receiver, we cannot access the frequencies that abound our room and we tend to think of the room as empty. Without the required instrument to communicate with God, the desired mind-set, we tend to think that God may not exist.

### **Communication with God**

As we know the natural laws are absolutely true to the principles they obey and do not deviate ('lie' or 'deceive'), hence psychologically speaking it is conceivable that the mind-set which stems from disciplined truthfulness is likely to be well in tune with the natural laws. We are taught that these attributes which are required to develop this mind-set, are 'God's' attributes that are induced in the creation in the spirit of the creator, by the 'Creator-God', God being the most kind, the most forgiving, the most gracious, the most true to promise; hence the term *Godly attributes*. Therefore once we develop these attributes in ourselves and are well in tune with natural laws we could be well *in tune* with the creator of nature also, thus facilitating our communication with the Creator.

Going along with this concept, extensive and sincerely carried out prayer further develops the relationship with God. As it develops the communication does not remain just one sided, but becomes two sided. The proof that God is listening to the person communicating with the *Master* is in the acceptance of prayer as experienced by many now as well as throughout history, while the proof that it was the *Master* who revealed the knowledge is in that we ultimately discover the truth of this knowledge through our scientific exploration.

## **Actual religious teachings vs. distortions**

In his book 'The God Delusion', published in 2006, Richard Dawkins refers to the 'downside' of religion and uses this as an argument against existence of God. An argument commonly cited for this purpose but an argument that in my view is inherently faulty. Although it is incorrect to describe it as such as we will see later, for the sake of discussion, let us *accept* for a moment that there maybe a 'downside' of religion. In answer I would like to say, firstly and simply, that presence of an 'undesirable' aspect of anything does not prove 'non-existence' of its source. Bad produce from a farm does not mean the farmer 'did not exist'. Just because some who claim to follow a religion behave in a socially inappropriate manner, and acceptingly some do behave inappropriately, it does not automatically infer that 'God does not exist'. Secondly and more importantly one needs to recognise that what is being referred to as 'downside' of religion is in fact distortion of religious teaching by people rather than the original teaching from any verifiable Divine source or genuine teaching of a prophet. One would agree with Dawkins in that there has been suffering and problems in human social development *due to these distortions*, but at the same time one needs to clarify that these problems are due to the *distorted* teachings and not the *actual* teachings of religion.

The distortions are carried out by people because of the usual *satans* of human psyche, also referred to earlier, ie selfishness, passion and greed. Throughout the history of religion those in influential position e.g. rulers, politicians and ironically even clergy have carried out distortions for the sake of their own advantage. All major religions have suffered from this satanic influence. However, again, if a code is distorted and consequently there is suffering, it cannot be taken as proof that there is no need for a code or that *the maker of the code does not exist*. If traffic code is broken and there is horrific consequence with injury and loss of life does it mean that the traffic code itself is a bad thing and we should abandon it altogether and that those who developed it like the police and legislative authority *do not exist*? In fact, it is these psychological satans that religion teaches us how to strengthen ourselves against. If they go unchecked our behaviour tends to become destructive consequently causing suffering to society. Distortion of original religious teachings leading to

inappropriate behaviour by the 'misled' in the name of religion is an example of how these satans cause suffering in society.

### **Religion and spiritual growth**

In evolutionary terms development of increasingly complex life forms actually meant development of increasing consciousness which in turn led to increasing awareness of our environment, thought and behaviour. We the humans have developed a capacity to determine our behaviour from a wide spectrum which on one hand has the extremes of being totally hedonistic and ruthless like a wild animal and on another being completely *godly* and virtuous. We are taught that the need of religion came about because of our need for such a code, a code of behaviour that could help us develop moral strengths. Religion gives us a code of conduct that helps us develop towards the godly end of the spectrum.

If the original and undistorted religious teachings are followed diligently, human ambitions are disciplined and human sensibilities refined so our drive is channelled constructively for the benefit of society and our pleasure is associated with doing good and being fair and we become sensitised to suffering of others, alleviating which is a source of real pleasure and contentment to a person so refined by religion. Anything otherwise becomes distasteful for such a person. Prophets are the best example to look at if we were to want to learn this by example, but the examples are certainly not confined to prophets alone. Millions benefit from this code and become a source of beneficence for our society.

### **Godless Void**

Another important psychological point can be well illustrated by another example. A glass can never be really empty. Remove some drink from it and air will fill up the gap. Remove the true God from our minds and other gods will fill the gap.

Our mind requires goals which it then works towards. When these goals are sometimes deviated from the acceptable norm, as in mental illness, certain psychological therapies are used to readjust the mental goals. Cognitive therapy would focus on our reasoning, behaviour therapy on how we respond and behave in a

given environment while psychodynamic therapy focuses on the attitudes that build during our growing years. Similarly for those who do not mentally entertain the moral code from a Divine source, life then begins to follow some other code; ‘live the life to its full’: a code of hedonism, meaning to live for the sake of pleasure as much as possible irrespective of any long term consequences; ‘it is my life...’: a code of selfishness, meaning no need of considering impact of ones actions on others as long as the individual has something to gain from the action; a code of materialism, meaning complete pursuit of material gains may it lead to corruption or interrupt sources of income for smaller businesses; code of lust for power, meaning unrestricted strife for power may it impact others in a drastic manner or require deceiving people, etc. Acceptingly these examples are about extremes but it does illustrate the point. It is not difficult to understand that the risk of developing such extreme attitudes is much higher if our mental *satans* are not controlled right from their root level through moral discipline.

Some may argue for a moral code but consider a ‘Divine’ source as unnecessary. They would argue that individual human beings have the capacity to determine what is moral and what isn’t. Let us look at the example of the traffic code again. What would be the situation like if instead of having traffic code from an established authority; individual drivers were to determine rules of driving as they went along? And then imagine people with driving experience in very different circumstances visiting other parts of the world and continuing with this autonomous method of traffic rules. Try to consider how organised traffic is likely to be in such environment, or actually, how disorganised. Would we not want to go for traffic code from an established authority which can be trusted? Similarly in order to determine a moral-spiritual code would we not want to go for an authority whose trust has been established through history, the prophets, particularly so in today’s world when so much concern is being expressed about lack of peace in all aspects of our society? I would again welcome the readers to make an unbiased comparative analysis of societies that ‘gave up on God’ and their consequent psycho-socio-politico-economic difficulties and societies formed by advent of (God’s) prophets and their immediate disciples who followed the teachings in their original purity. The point will be much better illustrated.

## **Conclusion**

In conclusion, it seems that the atheistic arguments are almost always based on lack of correct understanding of the philosophy of religion or on distortions of religious teaching instead of the true teachings, or is sometimes relating to a lack of will to discipline our mental *satans*. Hence if we are to search for God let us not do it like the Russian cosmonaut who on return from a space trip declared that he has searched for God even beyond the limits of our planet into space and has not found any; or the English poet, Shelley who went deep into the caves and shouted for God and on not receiving a response to his shouting concluded that God did not exist. On the other hand let us try to search for God in a manner taught to us by the prophets whose manner not only appealed to their contemporaries but appeals to anyone at any time as long as one has sincere quest and keeps an open mind.

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