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God's Song of Myself

“I celebrate myself, and sing myself,
And what I assume you shall assume,
For every atom belonging to me as good belongs to you.

You will hardly know who I am or what I mean,
But I shall be good health to you nevertheless,
And filter and fibre your blood.

Failing to fetch me at first keep encouraged,
Missing me one place search another,
I stop somewhere waiting for you.”

—WALT WHITMAN (1819-1882), SONG OF MYSELF



STATUS UPDATE

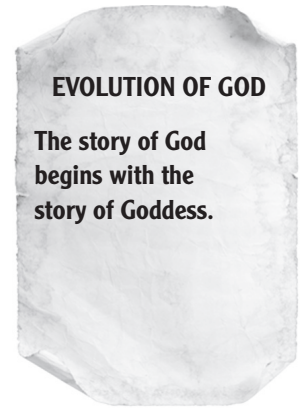
- ❖ Men and women seek the Truth.
- ❖ Men and women search for the “God Particle”, “God Gene”, and “God Spot.”
- ❖ God facilitates a meeting of two great minds – Nobel laureate scientist Albert Einstein, seeking to understand “God’s thoughts”, and Nobel laureate poet Rabindranath Tagore, seeking to know “God’s soul.” Ironically, the later evolution of science pointed to the direction stated by the poet.
- ❖ God writes his Song of Myself, fashioned after Walt Whitman’s famous poem.

NOTES FROM HISTORY (TIMELINE: 400,000 BC TO NOW)

WHERE IT ALL BEGAN

In the beginning ... there were no humans; the universe was a vast and desolate place. *Homo sapiens*, the only surviving species of humans, appeared on the face of the planet earth about 250,000 to 400,000 years ago. As soon as humans appeared, they wondered about the mysteries of nature, and thus arose beliefs; and the God consciousness was born, forming the basis of our religious belief system, one of the many of our belief systems—scientific, political, and moral, to name a few.

Anthropologists believe that the story of God begins with the story of Goddess, with the imagination of Deity as female. This is based on archaeological finds of female figures and cave paintings, which far outnumber their male counterparts. The Venus of Hohle Fels (dated 35,000–40,000 years ago), discovered in 2008 in Germany, is the oldest female figurine that some think of as the first known religious image, perhaps of the Mother Goddess. Another example of an early religious image (dated 24,000–26,000 years ago) is the Goddess of Willendorf, an 11.5 cm limestone statuette discovered in Austria in 1908.



EVOLUTION OF GOD

The story of God begins with the story of Goddess.

These figurines and other cave arts discovered by anthropologists provide a window into the possible belief systems of our early ancestors, as we have no record of our history from those early years. The history of writing, a form of art used to express thoughts by letters, signs, and marks, goes back only about 5,000 to 6,000 years, to the third or fourth millennium BC. Before the invention of writing, human thoughts and beliefs about God were preserved and passed on through oral traditions, some of which found written expression at a later time.

The story of God unfolded through the years as *Homo sapiens* spread across earth from one continent to another. Raw interactions with enormously powerful natural forces led early humans to take shelter in different forms of beliefs because those helped them to integrate their experiences of a diverse and mysterious world. This pragmatic approach of the ancient periods continues today in the twenty-first century because of the ever-unfolding nature of the mysterious universe that encompasses our existence. Sir Ernst Chain, recipient of the 1945 Nobel Prize in Medicine for his work on the structure of penicillin, wrote: "I consider the power to believe to be one of the great divine gifts to man through which he is allowed in some inexplicable manner to come near to the mysteries of the Universe without understanding them. The capability to believe is as characteristic and as essential a property of the human mind as is its power of logical reasoning, and far from being incompatible with the scientific approach, it complements it and helps the human mind to integrate the world into an ethical and meaningful whole."

THE BELIEF CONUNDRUM

With our different forms of beliefs came debates and a whirlwind of questions during thousands of years of human existence. The essentially primitive and practical questions of how to placate the gods transformed into more philosophical and scientific questions as humans gained more control over nature with the progression of time. Does God exist? Is there a “God Gene” that predisposes us to a belief in higher spirits? Is there a “God Spot” in our brain? Is there a special area in our brain that controls our belief in God? Is belief in God biological? Or is it sociological? Or is it the outcome of an evolutionary process? These are some of the questions that still remain unanswered.

These questions led to an enormous amount of theorizing and writing, which culminated in numerous scientific studies. In 2001, two American medical doctors, Andrew Newberg and Eugene D’Aquila, claimed to have taken a “photograph of God” using a Single-Photon Emission Computed Tomography (SPECT) machine. They injected a radioactive tracer into the cerebral blood supply of eight Tibetan Buddhist monks during meditation and several Franciscan nuns during prayer. The images of the subjects’ blood flow patterns showed increased activity in the prefrontal cortex. Thus, the scientists located the “Unknowable” (or the feeling of Him) in our upper rear parietal lobes, both right and left. The scientists also observed decreased activity in the Orientation Association Area (OAA) of our brain, which helps us differentiate between “I” and “not-I”—the individual and the rest of the world. Newberg and D’Aquila wrote a book called *Why God Won’t Go Away: Brain Science and the Biology of Belief*, wherein they claimed: “The deepest origins of religion are based in mystical experience, and ... religions exist because the wiring of the human brain continues to provide believers with a range of unitary experiences.”

*In 2001, American
doctors took God’s
photograph.*

Geneticist Dean Hamer postulated the “God Gene” hypothesis in 2005, promoting the notion that humans inherit genetic material that predisposes them to a belief in higher spirits who transcend humanity. After analyzing DNA and personality score data from over 1000 individuals, Hamer identified this magical gene to be VMAT2 (Vesicular Monoamine Transporter 2).

In the latest such study, published in *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences* in 2009, scientists scanned the brains of 40 participants, including Christians, Muslims, Jews, and Buddhists. Professor Jordan Grafman, a cognitive neuroscientist at the National Institute of Neurological Disorders and Stroke in Maryland, concluded on the basis of that study that “There is nothing unique about religious belief in these brain structures. Religion doesn’t have a ‘God Spot’ as such; instead it’s embedded in a whole range of other belief systems in the brain that we use every day.”

In this manner, the existence of God has been proven, disproven, and re-proven throughout human history, giving rise to millions of human expressions on God.

God has shaped our world in every way imaginable and affects our day-to-day activities in some form or another, regardless of our belief or disbelief in an omnipotent God or in a God defined by a specific religion. Millions of people have been helped by other benevolent people inspired by God’s kind nature; at the same time, millions of people have been

persecuted and killed in the name of God as the battle for God has raged on throughout human history.

THE SEARCH CONTINUES...

Scientists still haven't confirmed the existence of the "God Particle", also known as the Higgs boson, first proposed almost fifty years ago by the world's top physicists. If a "God Particle" exists, it would complete the Standard Model of particle physics and explain how all particles get their mass, making it a key to the mysteries of nature. It is obvious that the existence of a "God Particle" is a matter of belief among the world's top scientists. Famous British theoretical physicist Stephen Hawking (1942–), author of the bestseller *A Brief History of Time*, has bet \$100 that the "God Particle" will never be found. This type of strong intuitive dissent among the world's best scientists about the existence of a specific particle points to the power of belief in shaping our worldview.

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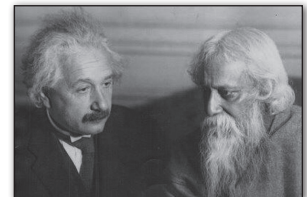
On July 4, 2012, two separate experimental teams using the Large Hadron Collider (LHC) at the European Center for Nuclear Research (CERN) reported convincing evidence for the "God Particle." The LHC is the most complex and largest man-made machine; with seventeen miles of tunnels, it can accelerate two beams of protons in opposite directions at nearly the speed of light (186,000 miles per second). Stephen Hawking, upon hearing the news on July 4, stated that he had just lost a \$100 bet. However, the elusive "God Particle" remains elusive, pending confirmation from scientists after complete data analysis, which may take until December 2012.

Michael Berg (1973–), an ordained Jewish rabbi and kabbalah scholar, developed the "God Formula", which states that "You" minus "Ego" plus "Transformative Sharing" equals God.

Albert Einstein (1879–1955), perhaps the greatest scientist the world has ever seen, wanted to know God's thoughts and spent a large part of his life looking for a "unified field theory", which is literally a "theory of everything." Einstein had problems accepting quantum mechanics as a complete theory and opposed the Copenhagen interpretation, which says there exists no objective physical reality other than that which is revealed through measurement and observation. He formulated a complex mathematical equation with a cosmological constant, which has been called the human approximation of "God's Equation."

DIALOGUE BETWEEN A SCIENTIST AND A POET

Rabindranath Tagore (1861–1941), the Nobel Laureate poet and philosopher from India, wanted to know "God's soul", and spent a large part of his life looking for a "unified theory" of humanity and God. Because, to him, "True knowledge is that which perceives the unity of all things in God."



So, can we imagine what Einstein and Tagore—one man trying to understand "God's thoughts" and another man searching for "God's soul"—