

Save Yourself From Atheistic Fanaticism

To an untrained ear, a sweet tune will seem just a sound. Or maybe even a noise. A noise that is disturbing, irritating, and outrageous. A noise that ought to be silenced at all costs.



To spiritually untrained people, all religious expressions – prayers, chants, artis – are just ordinary activities. Or maybe even pointless rituals that are pre-scientific, superstitious, and dangerous. Rituals that must be stopped at all costs.



The Bhagavad-Gita (15.10) cautions against such atheistic presumptuousness: “The dynamics of spirit – how the soul resides in and departs from the material body, how the soul seeks pleasure in matter under the spell of illusion – cannot be seen by those deluded by ignorance. But those illumined with eyes of knowledge can see all this clearly”

LEPTONS

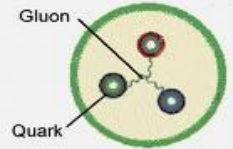
e^- μ^- τ^-
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ANTILEPTONS

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If we were to ask a group of people, “Do you believe in the existence of a lepton or a baryon?” most people would stay mum. Those who know these as subatomic particles will say, “Scientists say – and so I believe – that these particles exist.” Such deference to scientific authority for matters beyond ordinary jurisdiction is reasonable and desirable.

Baryon



Yet to the question, “Do you believe in the existence of soul or God?” almost all in the same group of people will express some opinion; the atheists will be assertive, even aggressive, despite this question is far beyond their jurisdiction. Worse, they will condemn deference to spiritual authority as blind faith.



This double standard begs the question: Is no training, no qualification needed to pass judgment on spiritual matters? ISKCON founder-acharya Srila Prabhupada, during his talk at MIT (Massachusetts Institute of Technology), famously asked, “In MIT, why is there no department to study the almighty?”



To realize the absolute necessity of systematic training for understanding a serious subject, let's consider quantum physics. Noble Laureate physicist Richard Feynman states, “[our current physics] describes nature as absurd from the point of view of common sense. And it agrees fully with experiment. So I hope you can accept nature as she is – absurd.” A physics student has to first believe the world buzzes with components that are intrinsically unobservable and undergo training for eight to ten years before he can begin comprehending quantum reality.

THE SPIRITUAL SCIENTIST

Yet when spiritual teachers ask for something similar: accept the existence of the soul and God and train yourself through material regulation and spiritual meditation to experience higher reality, objections abound, “Why should I follow any rules? All this is unscientific.” An atheist giving an argument like this is similar to judge declaring the verdict before even starting the hearing of the case.



Don't we need a break from such atheistic fanaticism?

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