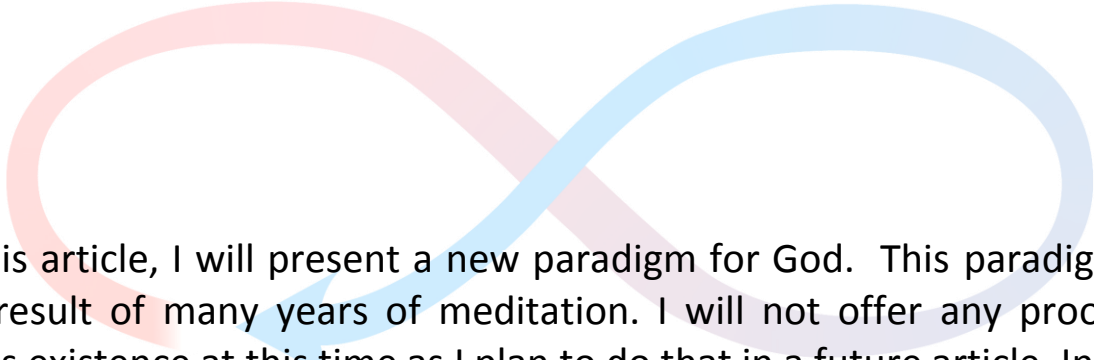




A New Paradigm for God

by

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In this article, I will present a new paradigm for God. This paradigm is the result of many years of meditation. I will not offer any proof of God's existence at this time as I plan to do that in a future article. In this article, I will limit my discussion to what God is in terms of attributes and limitations.

Before starting, let us review what has been the traditional paradigm of God. The major religions of Christianity, Islam, and Judaism present a monotheistic God that is locked in a cosmic struggle with Satan for the souls of mankind. Those people who follow God will be rewarded with eternal life in Heaven. Those people who follow Satan will be condemned to the eternal fires of Hell. Christianity takes this paradigm one step further by having God's Son become mortal and dying on a cross to defeat Satan and save mankind.

This traditional paradigm of God has served mankind well for over two thousand years. Unfortunately, our modern scientific age questions the

validity of God, Satan, Heaven, and Hell. The story of creation in Genesis has been replaced by the Big Bang Theory of modern science. The concept of a separate creation of mankind has been replaced with the Theory of Evolution. Modern educated people are turning to atheism and agnosticism because they can no longer accept both what theologians say they must accept on faith and what science has discovered through observation and rational thought over the last few centuries.

Any new paradigm of God must be based more on knowledge and less on belief. God must be consistent with what science has discovered. This is accomplished by looking at what can be observed, but which science cannot explain. Whereas the traditional paradigm of God is taught as absolute truth, any new paradigm must be presented more as a theory. Just as a theory changes as more scientific discoveries are made, our paradigm of God must be allowed to change as we learn more about God and our universe.

The Mental World

In a previous article, titled *The Three Realities*, I presented three “realities” that have been observed to exist. By definition, a reality must be observable and have completely different attributes and follow different laws. The reality of the physical universe is observable all around us. The physical universe is very deterministic and follows the laws of chemistry and physics. The reality of the subatomic world is something that has only been observed by particle physicists, but we accept its existence because it has been verified in a multitude of scientific experiments. The subatomic world follows laws that are probabilistic in nature.

The third reality is observed as human consciousness. Science cannot explain consciousness, but we all know that it exists. Philosophers are split into the physicalists and dualist camps. Physicalists argue that

consciousness will one day be explained by our physics. Dualists argue that consciousness has to be a separate reality because its properties and laws are not compatible with those of physics. For example, our consciousness is capable of creating things (e.g. a symphony) and follows the principle of free will. Both of these attributes run counter to the deterministic nature of our physical universe and the probabilistic nature of the subatomic world.

My new paradigm of God expands on the reality of human consciousness. It postulates that, rather than billions of separate human minds, there is a Mental World of which our minds are all a part. The human brain functions as an interface device between our human body, which exists in the reality of the physical universe, and our mind which exists in the reality of the Mental World. Human consciousness is the boundary between the physical world and the Mental World. We only think we have individual human minds because our brains developed from the physical universe and have not evolved enough to directly experience the universality of the Mental World.

God exists as this Mental World. As humans, our minds exist in this divine world of God. If we open our minds enough through meditation, we can actually receive thoughts from the greater Mental World of God. If we work at it, we can even develop our own personal relationship with God.

When we die, it is only our physical body that dies. Our human minds continue to exist in the Mental World. There is no separate heaven and hell. There is only eternal existence in the Mental World. One does not have to be Catholic, or Jewish, or Muslim to have this eternal existence. Everyone, including Hindus, Buddhists, and even atheists will have this eternal existence.

Consciousness, however, becomes silent upon the death of the physical body because it is only the passageway between our physical existence

and our divine existence. This has ramifications when it comes to the concept of “self”. Also, there is the issue of what our eternal existence will be like and whether how we live our lives will affect that existence. These topics will be deferred to a future article.

The Attributes of God

As mentioned earlier, dualists argue that the properties exhibited by human consciousness are not compatible with the properties of the physical universe. So what are the properties of God? We can develop a partial list by observing the properties of the human mind. However, a comprehensive list is currently beyond observational capabilities. As the human brain continues to evolve, we may someday come to realize additional attributes of God.

The human mind can store and recall memories and experiences. I believe these memories and experiences are stored in a repository within the Mental World. While science tells us the human brain has structures capable of storing memories for a short term, science is at a loss for explaining how long-term memories are stored. Observations of stroke victims show that long-term memories persist no matter what part of the brain becomes damaged due to strokes. In Alzheimer patients, long-term memory is one of the last things to disappear. I would argue that this is due to the entire brain’s interfacing capability becoming severely compromised through the death of neuron cells.

The human mind has knowledge. Knowledge, then, is another attribute of God. I believe that all knowledge comes from God. Writers of the Bible and Quran claim that the knowledge contained within those books are the word of God. As a result, we treat them as sacred text. I believe that all knowledge comes from God. God revealed the principles of geometry to the ancient Greek mathematician Euclid. God revealed the laws of classical physics and the calculus to Isaac Newton. When humans began seeking a refinement of classical physics, God

revealed additional properties of physics to Albert Einstein. In my opinion, all books of knowledge should be treated as sacred texts from God.

One item of knowledge that appears to only exist in our minds is the concept of infinity. We cannot experience infinity because nothing in our physical universe is infinite. For example, we cannot write out the value of π because it is an infinite sequence of digits. We can only use approximations of π when we try to use it in a calculation using physical world devices. However, in our minds, we can conceptualize the value of π as the ratio of the perimeter of a semicircle to its radius. Mentally, we recognize that we can cancel out π if it appears in both the numerator and denominator of an expression. This understanding of the infinite nature of π is something we share in common with God.

Philosophers argue whether we have free will or whether we are deterministic. The deterministic arguments come from the fact that our physical universe is highly deterministic. Since we are born into a deterministic world, it is only natural to think that our brain and mind must operate on this same deterministic principle. However, our observations of human behavior suggest that the human mind does have the attribute of free will. Because of this free will, we are capable of deciding to do something despite any anything in the physical world trying to cause us to do something else. For example, the decision to take a family vacation to a certain destination may be based on a simple desire to go there rather than something in the physical world causing us to go to that destination. Since free will is an attribute of the human mind, it is also an attribute of God.

The ability to create things from nothing is also an observed attribute of the human mind. Hence, it is an attribute of God. When Beethoven created his Ninth Symphony, it started out as an idea in his head. At that point in his lifetime, Beethoven was deaf and could not physically hear the music as he composed it. But yet, he brought this symphony

into the physical world by writing it on paper and giving it to musicians who then played the music. Because of creativity, human consciousness can be the uncaused cause of things to happen in the physical world. The act of creating Beethoven's Ninth Symphony was an uncaused act. However, that uncaused act, cause the symphony to become a part of our physical world.

Humans have the capability to communicate thoughts from one human mind to another. However, humans cannot communicate thoughts directly from one person to another. They must first convert the thought into some language, pass the encoded thought to another person that understands the language, and then the message receiver must reconvert the words of the language back into a thought. Unfortunately, these conversions can cause something to be lost in the translation. God, however, can communicate directly in thoughts without any conversions. I experience this in my meditations. I do not hear words in my meditations. What I observe in my meditations are thoughts popping into my head.

The last attribute of God that I will present in this article is somewhat more difficult for the novice to comprehend. I believe that God, and our human minds, exist outside of time and space. The concept of being outside of time and space is not totally foreign to some scientists. Cosmologists feel that time and space only exists within the confines of our physical universe and that our universe has an edge. Beyond the edge of the universe, cosmologists feel that time and space do not exist.

If something exists in space, you should be able to point at it. Can you point at your mind? You can point at your brain because it does exist in space. However, neurologists cannot point at anything in your brain that is your mind. Can you point at a long-term memory? Neurologists can point at synapses in your brain that help you perform a task (e.g. playing the piano). However, neurologists cannot identify a place in

your brain where a long term memory is stored. I believe we cannot point at our mind or long-term memories because they exist outside of our concept of space.

In a similar manner, I believe God and our minds exist outside of time. When something exists in time, it follows a very methodical passage of time - never speeding up, never slowing down, and never going backwards. I have personally experienced something to which many athletes can relate. When I am really focused on making a play in a physical competition, time seems to go into slow motion allowing me to do what is needed to make the play. Also, psychiatrists' offices are filled with people who are living in the past. They constantly replay past events over and over again in their minds. This ability of the mind to change the perceived passage of time and to relive events in the past runs counter to the fact that time only runs methodically forward.

Limitations of God

In the traditional paradigm, God is almighty, all powerful, omnipotent, and all-anything else you can imagine. In this new paradigm, God has certain limitations. These limitations eliminate some of the paradoxes that come up when talking about God. One example is that God knows what we are going to do even though we have free will. One of my favorite paradoxes is "can God create a rock that even God cannot lift". In this section, we will explore some of the limitations of God.

The first limitation is that God does not know the future when free will is involved. When it comes to things like earthquakes and asteroids slamming into planets, God can do the calculations to know when such events will occur in the future. But when it come to individuals exercising their free will, God does not know what will happen until it happens. Existence outside of time does not mean that you know everything that will happen in the future. It merely means that you can

manipulate the methodical passage of time for things happening in the present or that happened in the past.

A second limitation of God is that God cannot violate the laws of the other realities. On October 13, 1917, tens of thousands of people experienced what has come to be known as the “Miracle of the Sun” at Fatima in Portugal. Reporters were on hand to report the miracle where the Sun was perceived to be moving abnormally in the sky. Even though thousands of people witnessed the miracle, astronomers of the day noted no abnormal movement of the Sun. It was all a perception in the minds of the people at Fatima. The fact is, we would have no science at all if God could manipulate the laws of physics on a whim. Our knowledge of physics and chemistry depends on the absolute predictability of the laws.

It should be noted that miraculous cures, which are observed in our world, do not violate this limitation. The human body has abilities that science has not yet discovered, including how to cure itself. We may not know how to trigger a cure response in our own bodies, but I believe God can help us trigger that response without our knowledge.

A third limitation of God is that God has neither the eyes to see, the ears to hear, nor any other sense to directly experience our world. My personal definition of “life” is that life occurs when God makes a connection to something in the physical universe and can influence that something. That connection is two-way. The sensory receptors of living things can pass whatever they experience back to the Mental World. As a result, God is experiencing the physical world through us.

The last limitation (although it is not really a limitation) is that God is not human. First, God is neither male nor female. Our sex is strictly something that exists in this physical universe. Second, God is not emotional. An emotional response is a physiological response of the human body based on hormones that are introduced to our system

under certain conditions. God does not have hormones. Finally, we are not created in the image and likeness of God. Only our mind is like God. Too often, people tend to view God as being in the image and likeness of mankind.

Conclusion

To summarize this new paradigm of God, God exists as a reality separate from our physical universe that I am calling the Mental World. Mankind exists in both the physical world through our bodies and the Mental World through our minds. Our brains function as an interface device between the two realities. God has specific attributes that we are able to ascertain by observing the attributes of the human mind. Among these attributes are knowledge, free will, creativity, the ability to store memories and experiences, and the ability to communicate through thoughts. We can communicate with God through meditation and even establish a personal relationship with God. God exists outside of time and space, but God cannot predict the future where free will is involved. God cannot violate the laws of the other two realities, but God can influence what happens in the physical world because life, by definition, is a connection between the mental and physical worlds. When life ends in the physical world, that connection is broken. However, the mental component of that connection will exist eternally.

For More Information

If you would like to learn more about Existential Gods in general, or about my personal Existential God, please visit

www.ExistentialGod.org.