

# Book Reviews

## SCIENCE AND RELIGION: TOWARDS THE RESTORATION OF AN ANCIENT HARMONY

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In an ever-shrinking and more crowded world, mankind can expect the increasing impact of global problems of all types—technological, environmental, and social. But global problems require global solutions, and to achieve the necessary united action it is of major importance to resolve conflicting visions of humanity's *raison d'être* and destiny. Central to that task is the resolution of the long-standing conflict between science and religion, the two great forces that, more than any others, determine our outlook on the world.

In a short book of only 133 pages, structured around three glimpses of the history of science, the author undertakes to expose the root causes of science's conflict with religion, a task accomplished in a most engaging and straightforward style and with a minimum of technical jargon. The message of the first chapter is that conflict between science and religion arose from the fundamental misunderstanding of their respective roles. The second chapter discusses the scientific bases of pervading secular philosophies which, taking science as their sole guide, have led to materialistic views of life and society and to blind, mechanistic models of evolution and of the universe in its entirety. The author's encapsulation, in the third chapter, of the radical, novel concepts of "new-age" physics is presented with the insight of a practicing particle physicist directly involved with the field and with scrupulous care to distinguish what is firmly known and understood from what is conjecture.

Bahá'í concepts are introduced in a natural way in each chapter, and the harmony between these concepts and those emerging in modern science is presented in a clear and thought-provoking light. The "bottom line" is that when the roles of science and religion are properly understood, these disciplines will be seen to complement one another in laying the groundwork for the harmonious global society that must surely come.

For a book with such an immense subject matter, there appear to be surprisingly few shortcomings. Two seem worthy of mention. First, readers may detect occasional recourse to questionable logic. To give one specific example, that there is no evidence science does not have limits is adduced to support the proposition that it does have limits. It may well have limits, but one cannot prove that by appeal to ignorance. Second, some readers may find the author's presentation of the history of science and religion, as seen from their own professional perspectives, somewhat lacking in balance. But to cover all significant aspects fully in so few pages would indeed be an impossible feat. All in all, the author has done an outstanding service in presenting root causes of the conflict between science and religion, as well as suggestions for their resolution, in a readable book from which all readers will gain something and many will gain much.