



From the Editor To Our Respected Readers

We live in an age of paradigm-shifts - revolutions that are sweeping all domains of our life transforming our ideas, attitudes and worldviews. In the world of science these radical changes reveal themselves not only in the startlingly new revelations science is unfolding day by day, but also in the new way science is done. Today when it comes to scientific discoveries, the old paradigm of 'genius in isolation' is giving way to one of 'experts in collaboration.' In the past scientific development relied heavily on geniuses like Kepler, Newton, Einstein, and others who laboured for years almost single-handedly locked up in their little cells, and at the end took the world by surprise by announcing their ingenious discoveries. Today major breakthroughs in science are achieved often by a team of experts, pooling their resources together in a collaborative venture. The Human Genome Project is a fine illustration of this paradigm shift in scientific creativity. Nobel prizes in science often go to groups of experts rather than to single individuals. Most of the creative scientific papers are co-authored.

This new trend of teamwork and collaboration is conspicuous not only within a given discipline but also between disciplines. More and more the awareness is gaining ground that true and lasting human progress can be achieved only when the different disciplines are willing to share their resources together in the spirit of genuine and respectful dialogue. In recent times this spirit has been exemplified in the attempts made in various parts of the world to foster an ongoing dialogue between science and religion. *Omega: The Indian Journal of Science and Religion* is one of India's attempts to provide a much-needed impetus in this dialogical process, particularly from the multi-religious and multi-cultural perspective

of India. First of its kind in India, *Omega* is an attempt to promote a creative and constructive dialogue between science and religion so that the rich resources of science and the deep insights of religion can be pooled together for the betterment of humanity and the cosmos.

We are happy to bring to you the maiden issue of *Omega* with contributions from six national and international scholars. The opener by Ted Peters, the internationally-reputed science-religion scholar and writer, focuses precisely on the extreme need for and the rich dividends from a dialogue between modern science and ancient faith. He points out that the old “warfare model” fails to do justice to the true relationship between religion and science. He depicts the relationship as one between a multi-branched tree and a nestling bird that finds safe haven in the branches. In fact, there are good reasons, historical and ideological, to support the view that science was religion’s gift to the world, rather than its rival, much less its enemy.

In today’s world the proposed dialogue between science and religion is not an option but almost an obligation. The papers by A.N. Tripathi and Job Kozhamthadam highlight this point. Tripathi points out that the domain of science has expanded significantly to comprise non-scientific avenues, thanks particularly to the astonishing developments in the biological sciences. These raise serious social, moral and ethical issues which neither science nor the scientists concerned are equipped to handle. Some of these issues need immediate attention, while some others will become serious in the years to come. Kozhamthadam illustrates a serious challenge humans will have to face in the future when the Human Genome Project and genetic engineering on the one hand, and the scientific researches in physical immortality on the other, will have made substantial progress. Collaboration between these two powerful and promising areas of scientific research could give rise to a trans-homo-sapiens species with frightening social, moral and religious consequences. Since the history of science has given us ample evidence that in science today’s dreams are tomorrow’s reality, one may not complacently overlook this possible scenario.

This dialogical approach can be a source of new insights and new openings for further progress. Although the concept of God is as old as human thought itself and volumes have been written on this topic in all

cultures and at all times, even today this concept remains a challenging enigma. Babu Joseph points out that quantum theology based on the findings of quantum theory, the most successful and most productive branch of contemporary science, can shed fresh light on the matter. From the perspective of quantum theology God is an Infinite Energy Source. God is the Creator of the universe, which is of finite energy, and is its constant Observer. Many scientists may find this perspective resonating with their scientific temper.

One of the obstacles to such a fruitful dialogue in the past has been the privileged position accorded to science on the plea that scientific knowledge is based on incontrovertible observational data, whereas religious knowledge stands on slippery ground. K.S. Radhakrishnan challenges this privileged status of science and shows that scientific observations are ridden with problems. He argues that every form of genuine knowledge has a justification of its own, and science is one among many forms of knowledge. Hence any hesitation by science to dialogue with other disciplines like religion is unjustified.

The final paper by John R. Albright is a personal sharing of the experiences of an international scholar who made this dialogical approach his way of life. This attitude of dialogue helped him to tide over the antagonism between creation and evolution on the one hand, and between determinism and chance on the other.

India is a nation that has always taken both religion and science seriously. However, till recently hardly any serious effort was made to integrate the two in a formal and systematic way, particularly in the light of the developments in contemporary science. *Omega* is a modest beginning to remedy this deficiency. We are sure that with the generous support and encouragement of you, our learned and respected readers, we can make progress and render valuable service to the cause of science-religion dialogue, particularly in the Indian context. We gratefully count on your generous support and encouragement.

Job Kozhamthadam
Editor