

# **Cosmic Wisdom and Human Health: Connections Suggesting Reconsideration of the God Question**

Paper Prepared by David A. Carlson, Ph.D.  
for  
The 12<sup>th</sup> International Symposium on Unification Thought  
“*Modern Science and Unification Thought*”  
December 8-11, 2000  
Taipei, Taiwan

## **Introduction**

I beg your indulgence as I offer a brief personal note. I was raised on a Colorado farm, lived very close to nature, and naturally acquired a scientific inclination. At the same time, like Kant I was deeply moved by such things as the beauty and mystery of the stars in the night sky. Both spheres, the scientific and the spiritual/moral impressed themselves upon my character. When I attended the University of Colorado, I studied biology, physiology and chemistry, and continued to be fascinated by the beauty and complexity of the natural world. I took a scientific approach to things. But at the same time, I had an abiding trust in things of a more internal/spiritual bent. I did not take any academic courses in religion, philosophy, or similar fields and so I never took the opportunity to do some serious intellectual reflection in this area. Thus, the tension between these alternative perspectives, the scientific and the spiritual/philosophical never really impressed itself upon my mind. I did not realize that I needed to reflect deeply on the fact that, although existentially I held both affirmations, the logical fascination of the real, scientific world and the internal, spiritual character of my place in the nature of things, in short my purpose for being here. Thus, there existed objectively, and especially in academia or intellectual circles, a striking discrepancy between what I was studying with my head, and what I felt in my heart. Only later, when I did study philosophy and theology did it strike me that science and faith, and their respective understandings of the world, were at odds with each other. Since I came to realize this, I have held an interest in the realms of science and religion. Even more recently I have come to hold a keen interest in health and healing, and the many issues in the new fields of healing. These various factors all constitute the point of departure for this paper.

Human health has long been a topic of interest in most cultures. Some of the recent books on the topic have achieved significant popularity. Perhaps one of the best known proponents of the new perspective is that of a Harvard doctor, Andrew Weil in his book, *Spontaneous Healing*. Another well-known author is Deepak Chopra, who hails from an Eastern perspective, and offers *Ageless Body, Timeless Mind*. Modern views of the physical body and its capacity to “heal itself” are noteworthy. The important role played by the mind in health and healing is so well-documented that it can no longer be easily dismissed. The new subject of PNI (psycho-neuro-immunology) is developing our understanding of the role played in healing by our mind, our emotions, feelings, values, in short, more mental and internal factors, beyond the merely physical nature of the latest drug or medicine. The significance of the role of the mind is actually a point of profound significance, not just for the realm of healing, but for wider

philosophical issues as well, not least of which is the “God question.”. The fact that something invisible, namely the mind, can play such an important role in health and healing can suggest new questions about the nature of the universe in which we live and the possibility of a universal or cosmic wisdom.

### **Cosmic Wisdom**

The term “cosmic wisdom,” as I am using it in this paper, deserves some explanation or clarification. Fortunately, this is easily done since I am relying on work that has already been offered. There is present in scientific circles a concept called the “anthropic principle.” The distinction between strong and weak aside, this principle, in brief, holds that: “if some feature of the natural world is required for our existence, then it must indeed be the case” (Greenstein, 46). In its purest form, it states: “The only things that can be known are those compatible with the existence of knowers” (Greenstein, 47). Paraphrasing, one might state that the universe exists in just such a way that it was possible for life to arise and exist. It almost seems as if the universe was precisely designed so that life could arise and exist. In fact, the mathematical coincidences which have been found by Greenstein, for example, are quite startling. Of the ten coincidences he offers, one is the fact that “The charges of the electron and proton have been measured in the laboratory and have been found to be precisely equal and opposite. Were it not for this fact, the resulting charge imbalance would force every object in the universe—our bodies, trees, planets, suns—to explode violently.” (Greenstein, 256) He further states that : “we come face to face with the inconceivable, the unfathomable: the moment of creation [re: Big Bang] itself. Suddenly we know something about it. It was such as to allow the present configuration of the cosmos ultimately to arise, and this required an adjustment not of one part in a thousand, not of one part in a trillion, but of one part in infinity. Creation was perfect.” (Greenstein, 135) Greenstein is a physicist and so as a scientist he must set the “God question” aside. But he does have a chapter on “The Watchmaker,” a reference to creation by design, which is supportive of the God question. In this chapter he states: Many people have sensed a strong similarity between the arguments of natural theology and those of the sort that anthropic investigations have revealed.” (Greenstein, 122) But he goes on to allow a disclaimer: “My counsel to all religious people is not to adopt the arguments in this book as evidence for the existence of their God.” (Greenstein, 192). More strongly, he adds that “I cannot accept the notion that it was God Himself who so carefully crafted the cosmos in order that it might bring forth life. I reject the supernatural.” (Greenstein, 197)

Greenstein seems to counter what I am trying to argue in this paper, but I quote him not for his conclusions concerning religion/philosophy, but for his work with the anthropic principle. Again, this principle holds that it almost seems as if the universe was precisely designed so that life could arise and exist.

As a counterbalance to Greenstein’s scientific modesty concerning the God question, I would like to draw attention to another, different viewpoint. This time it is that of a scholar who is not at all modest in expressing the conviction that we must take quite seriously now the possibility that there is a God behind this universe. Patrick Glynn, too, is discussing the anthropic principle, but is inspired for what it might seem to say about the tension between science and religion. He states that “we have all but overlooked a quiet revolution in scientific understanding...with radical implications for

the modern world view.” (Glynn, 28) “At the philosophical crux of this revolution is a conception known as ‘the Anthropic Principle’”. (Glynn, 28) He defines it in the sense that “its upshot is that, far from being an ‘accident,’ the existence of human life is something for which the entire universe appears to have been intricately fine-tuned from the start.” (Glynn, 28) He contends that “if it is valid, the Anthropic Principle overturns the central cosmological assumption—the assumption of the random universe—on which the modern atheistic philosophies were based..” (Glynn, 30) He argues that “the *a priori* commitment to the atheist notion of the random universe has proved so powerful in our time as to send many scientists scurrying to find logical, and sometimes illogical, arguments to explain away the massive evidence that threatens to refute it.” (Glynn, 31) He concludes by saying that “The Anthropic Principle does not settle the question; it is not a proof of God. But it alters the presumption; it shifts the *burden* of proof.” (Glynn, 32) He cautions that “Even if one took the Anthropic Principle as definitive proof of the ‘argument by design’ for God’s existence, it would not exhaust the ‘God question’”. (Glynn, 32) He holds that the problem of evil still offers a great challenge to the belief in a universe by design.

In response to Greenstein, I want to argue that as he correctly states, science cannot offer any proof of the existence of God. Science deals with the visible and must face its limitations, even if the evidence strongly suggests a Designer as the most logical basis for what the universe offers to us. This is where philosophy plays a role. In complementing science, philosophy does deal with the invisible, intangible realities which so deeply concern human life. The problem is we have never had a complete harmony of thought between science and religion, between science and philosophy. I will argue later that this is exactly what we now have in the form of Unification Thought. In response to Glynn, I want to reinforce his idea that science, as it is currently understood, is on the defensive now. But to his notion that even though the Anthropic Principle might be taken as a proof for God’s existence, it is not exhausted by it in view of the continuing problem of the existence of evil, I want to contend that, once again, Unification Thought, and the theology lying behind it, do adequately deal with the problem of evil. Thus, on both counts, Unification Thought offers much needed material for modern intellectual thought and reflection.

Now that I have offered two views of scholars concerned with the Anthropic Principle, one by a scientist and one by a philosopher, and found them both to be cautious, although in different ways, I want to continue by spelling out my contention that it was inevitable for the universe to allow for the formulation of such an idea as the anthropic principle because behind it, in an area where science as such cannot tread, since it treats the visible and tangible, but where philosophical logic must be given some credibility, is a certain reality, a certain cosmic wisdom which, indeed, did design the cosmos in such a way that life could arise and not only exist, but develop into a seemingly infinite variety of forms. This is possible because, it might be said, that the cosmos itself is “healthy.” Now what do I mean when I say that the universe is healthy?

The cosmos is like a gigantic organism which keeps itself healthy. The planets move through the heavens in mathematically ascertained orbits, any ecosystem left to itself will develop in certain ways, and pollution is not a factor. The Hudson River, near my home in New York, has been cared for in such a way that it is now purifying itself of the pollution which plagued it for some time. It is common knowledge that a river, or the ocean for that matter, left to itself will cleanse itself of pollution, and that a segment

of the environment does have cleansing qualities over time. In short, the environment seems to have built-in mechanisms which maintain its purity and health. Ecological succession is a well-documented field. The problem begins when human beings arise on the scene and develop their industry and all its by-products. Even then, the environment can nearly cleanse itself of pollution. But once the point is reached where the ecological balance breaks down, the limits are reached and the environmental capacity is exceeded, then a healthy environment is lost, and an unhealthy or diseased environment comes into being. The Rev. Moon has recently been promoting the Pantanal area of Brazil as one of humanity's last bastions of environmentally healthy nature. Anyone who has visited New York recently will see the unhealthy results of human populations.

The fact that when the environment is left to itself and human pollution is kept to a minimum, the environment actually begins to cleanse itself, to make itself more healthy, to eliminate or break noxious chemicals, wastes, etc. down into innocuous substances, which can be eliminated, is worthy of consideration. There seems to be built into the system a mechanism for purification, for making itself healthy, for maintaining the pristine condition in which it was meant to function. Let me call this built in mechanism a kind of cosmic or universal wisdom. Let us now turn to consider the human body.

I want to take this discussion to a new level and further contend that because the human body is itself a part of this universe, this cosmic wisdom is connected to us in important ways. One way in which this might be conceived may be called the universal-individual paradigm. According to this paradigm, the universal wisdom is individualized in its manifestation in each human being. This notion is not new; it was expressed in the Middle Ages in the sense that the human being is a microcosm of the macrocosm. But I am getting slightly ahead of myself. Let us consider the role played by the human mind in maintaining human health and see if we can draw some parallels or implications concerning this cosmic wisdom.

### **Human Health**

It is well recognized now that the human body has a significant capacity for healing itself if left to its own devices. Many have had the experience when sick of simply laying in bed and resting. One does not eat much, and drinks only water or juice. The body heals itself of sickness and disease, up to a point. Its immune system even has the capacity to fight off often dangerous germs if it has sufficient strength. People today advocate strengthening and toning the immune system as one good way to keep oneself healthy. Which means that once our immune system becomes weak or ineffective our body begins to lose its capacity for keeping itself functioning well, that is, healthy. One way we weaken it is by clogging it up with chemicals, drugs, medicines, antibiotics, etc. But it is not merely our immune system which operates in this fashion. Well recognized now is the profound role played by the mind in this process. Our thoughts, emotions, hopes, feelings, all come into play. The new field of PNI (psycho-neuro-immunology) offers sufficient testimony to the power of the mental in health. "The immune system, the body's front line of defense against disease; the cardiovascular system; the brain and nervous system—all have been explored independently. In recent years, however, neuroscientists with psychologists and immunologists have forged a new scientific discipline with the...name of psychoneuroimmunology, or PNI, a field that explores the body's most subtle interconnections." (Borysenko, 12) In fact, the role played by the

mind may be the predominant factor in determining one's health. "We are entering a new level in the scientific understanding of mechanisms by which faith, belief, and imagination can actually unlock the mysteries of healing." (Borysenko, 10) Unfortunately, many people encounter a society that offers many reasons for depression, neurosis, and mental illness. But, Borysenko's answer, her message, is that: "we are already perfect—our essential core is peaceful and whole. The work of healing is in peeling away the barriers of fear and past conditioning that keep us unaware of our true nature of wholeness and love." (Borysenko, 4) Such terms as belief, imagination, true nature, wholeness, and love are certainly not scientific concepts, but are important concepts nevertheless. The healing power of a strong belief or of love may have even more effect than that of a modern artificial, chemically-laden drug.

With these two poles in place, the scientific notion of an anthropic principle opening the possibility of some cosmic or universal wisdom operating throughout the universe, and the importance of the mind in human healing, I want to make some possible connections. Although much of this will be speculative, I think that what I say is coherent and has sufficient local power to bear consideration.

### **Connections**

If we come back now to a consideration of the anthropic principle, I think we can make certain justifiable connections. First, there is a connection between the human mind and the human body, a connection which is only now being understood at a level which gains support. Second, there is a connection between a cosmic or universal mind or wisdom and the physical universe or cosmos itself. Or, to put it in stark terms, the mind and body of the universe. This is far more a new idea than that of the human mind and body. Yet, I think it has a certain credibility in view of the evidence that is being accumulated, such as that of Greenstein's ten coincidences. Let us consider each of these connections in turn.

First of all, there seems little doubt that there is a definite connection between the human mind, which is invisible, and the human body, which is visible. The mind-body or mind-brain connection has been a point of interest for most of philosophical history, with many different perspectives being developed, none of them very satisfactory. One thinks of Descartes, for example, who completely separated them. If one approaches the question in the manner of the past, little progress can be made, philosophically. I think the issue becomes so abstract that it cannot be dealt with easily and I find it of limited help. Rather, I would turn to the new perspective of Unification Thought, which I feel offers valuable insight, because it places the mind-body connection in a broader context, that of the Divine design of creation, or in other words, the purpose of human life on earth. Especially if one considers the evidence from the area of health and healing, the intimate and close connection between the mind and body becomes much easier to comprehend, and furthermore such scientific evidence is in full harmony with the perspective set forth. We will never comprehend it in a full scientific manner, but we can understand the mind-body connection in a logical manner when it is seen in context of the overall scheme of things. Now let me turn to the other connection which I wish to make, that of the mind and body of the universe.

The connection between the mind and body of the universe does not appear so readily apparent, except on a large scale (both temporal and spatial) but I would like to argue that it is just as significant. Is it plausible to formulate such a connection between a cosmic mind, which is invisible (but which manifests in such a way that people can derive such things as the anthropic principle) and the cosmos itself? Let us assume for the sake of argument that there is such a connection between a cosmic or universal mind and the universe itself. I believe such an assumption is acceptable in view of the above evidence concerning the manner in which the universe cleanses itself of pollution or impurity (chemicals, etc.). Why would there be a movement in the direction of cleaning up pollution, for example, rather than a movement in the opposite direction? Why does the ocean, if left to its own inherent system tend to purify itself rather than become otherwise? Here, I am positing a connection of some type between cosmic mind, the intelligent wisdom guiding all activities in the cosmos (especially those of a cleansing nature), and the cosmos (this vast universe) itself, which can be understood to be like the “body” of this cosmic wisdom. In this sense, we human beings are each like single cells in the organism (body) of the cosmos.

I think that if these two connections, that between the human mind and body, and that between the universal mind and body are, at minimum, plausible, then there will exist sufficient reason to reconsider the God question. I believe that both have been made plausible. The discussion surrounding the anthropic principle has certainly placed a possible connection between the physical universe and cosmic wisdom which approaches the level of a veritable mind in the plausible category. Moreover, in view of the mounting evidence and experience from the realms of health and healing, the very real connection between the human mind and body has been placed solidly in the plausible category. Now, with respect to the God question, I think we are standing in a position to reconsider the issue.

### **Implications for the God Question**

The fact that our mind, which is invisible, can play so great a role in maintaining our health suggests new questions we might ask about the nature of the cosmos itself. The human physical body is itself a part of the physical universe. It contains the same elements, chemicals and constituents that the earth does. Yet it clearly responds to the influence of the invisible mind, to its feelings, emotions and beliefs. In fact, evidence is mounting that the influence of the mind is the dominant factor in maintaining one’s physical health. The way one thinks and feels has an enormous influence on the state of the physical body. One can even cure cancer through positive thinking, visualization, etc.

This leads us to ask whether the anthropic principle as formulated doesn’t also indicate the existence or reality of some type of superior mind or intelligence? Certainly, traditional religions have held this to be the case, although in most cases they may simply posit such a neutral term as “mind” in more specific, and value-laden terms as God, Allah, Buddha nature, etc.

When one examines the nature of the cosmos more scientifically, from the complexity of even a single leaf to the revolution of the planets around the sun, and the character of the inconceivably large galaxies, and finds a remarkable uniformity of action (as any physicist will tell you) I think it is incumbent upon any intelligent person

to consider the possibility of the existence of a superior intelligence. As Glynn states in his essay, “the *a priori* commitment to the atheist notion of the random universe has proved so powerful in our time as to send many scientists scurrying to find logical, and sometimes illogical, arguments to explain away the massive evidence that threatens to refute it.” (Glynn, 31). The massive evidence in this case is that presented by the anthropic principle, and I find it odd that scientists, who are supposed to deal with scientific truth, are having trouble accommodating some of the implications of this principle. According to Thomas Kuhn, when a scientific paradigm fails to address new evidence discovered by science, it is time to adjust the prevailing paradigm, until one comes up with a new paradigm which is able to accommodate the reality which science presents to us. Personal bias is not supposed to be a part of the scientific enterprise. So, again, any intelligent person should at least give new reflection to the evidence and consider the possibilities, including that of a Designer (or Creator) of the universe. Some physicists have posited such an implication, although doing so lies beyond the purview of science, a circumstance to which they readily admit. (such as Greenstein).

A philosopher, on the other hand, delights in entering into speculation of the same kind without any caution. In fact, I am going to draw upon a theoretical position as advocated by a philosopher for drawing out my implications for the God question. Dr. Sang Hun Lee, the systematizer of Unification Thought, offers an elegant paradigm for comprehending the issues raised in this paper in a coherent fashion in his theory of the Original Image (Lee, *Essentials of Unification Thought*).

### **An Explanatory Model Integrating Science and Faith**

Dr. Lee’s theory of the Original Image offers a rational paradigm which respects the facts of science while still allowing for the reality of faith. This is an ambitious statement, but I think it can be defended. As Lee states: “Unification Thought begins with God.” (Lee, 1) “We call the attributes of God the ‘Original Image,’ and we call the theory concerning those attributes the ‘Theory of the Original Image.’” The rationale here is that if we start from the premise that God designed and created the universe, then we can hold that He did so as would any artist, by drawing upon His own nature. Then it follows that the universe should manifest qualities reflecting the nature of God. Dr. Lee examines the nature of the universe in terms of the universal laws and principles which we see operating throughout every level of being. Unification Thought is the philosophical expression of the religious or theological teaching of the Rev. Sun Myung Moon, so the theological formulation is the basis of Unification Thought. Dr. Lee sets forth a philosophical picture of the nature of God, as it can be philosophically, that is, rationally comprehended by the human intellect. Then he analyzes the natures and principles operating in the universe to see if, in fact, the theory fit. There is a complete correspondence between the two: theory and reality. Empirical verification of the theory results from a close observation of the natural world, and the theoretical explanation that is posited offers an elegant and coherent explanation and rationale of the actual way in which the natural, social, and psychological worlds are experienced as operating. In short, the theory and the reality fit. The theory adequately explains the reality we experience and our experience of reality is true to the theory which is posited. Thus, the theory of the Original Image can be taken as a paradigm through which to understand and deal with our world and universe. As long as it successfully explains, predicts, and comprehends what our experience actually is, it can stand as a powerful paradigm, both scientifically and philosophically. This means that, given the position held by

Unification Thought on the God question, that there is, in fact, a Designer of the universe, it is incumbent upon any intellectual to offer serious and sincere reconsideration of the God question. This issue can no longer be lightly dismissed. Increasingly, the evidence indicates that it is more reasonable and logical to believe in the existence of a universal Designer than it is not to so believe. It is easy for a person of faith to believe, but even for a scientist, if one adheres to the scientific method, the question must be given sincere attention. Otherwise, science loses its credibility.

### **Conclusion**

If there is a superior intelligence in the cosmos, some obvious questions emerge: What is its nature? What is its purpose? What does it have to do with me? Even scientists must align their personal lives with the reality of this cosmic wisdom. No to do so is folly.

I believe that one thing this cosmic wisdom is calling us to do, is to strive to reach our full potential. We limit ourselves because of our limited perspectives. We are rational, emotional, and volitional beings and we need to strive to integrate these three aspects of our nature. As we accomplish this task, I dare say that the God question will cease being a question, and the reality of God will become a reality to us. I say this because as a person comes to experience the reality of absolute love, one's life is inevitably transformed. Science will always have its place, as it helps us create a comfortable living circumstance and helps us comprehend more and more about the universe in which we live, and about our own physical bodies in the case of health and healing. But faith, too, has its important place in our lives, and especially in the realm of health and healing.

I also believe that as we align ourselves more and more with this cosmic wisdom, our development of science and medicine will advance rapidly since we will have the opportunity to draw upon the collective wisdom of the ages.