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आ नौ भद्राः कर्तवो यन्तु विश्वतोऽदृग्भासो अपर्रीतास उद्भिदः । (R̥gVeda) *Let noble thoughts come to us from every side*

Science-Spirituality Dialogue The Citizens of the Earth Planet



A Discussion with
Prof. Holmes Rolston III (right),
*Templeton Laureate and Professor
of Philosophy at Colorado State
University, USA* and
Dr. T. D. Singh (left);
*Founding-Director of
Bhaktivedanta Institute*

Prof. Holmes Rolston: We have privileges as humans, but the privilege is accompanied with responsibility. So we are all stewards, or overseers of the creation. So, I think there's a sense in which humans are the most important in the creation; we have more powers to produce culture, and to learn about the way the world was built. We are the only creatures who know we inhabit the planet like this. So there's a way in which humans are on top, or the most important of the creatures, but there are other ways in which we're not so important. ... if there was no grass there would be no people or anything else. I'm trying to make the point that photosynthesis, which takes place in green plants, is fundamental and foundational to our whole energy cycles So if you were to take humans off the planet, then the wolves, the birds, or the grass would just continue uninterrupted. ... So now I can say humans are important in some sense, but I've got other senses in which the green plants are in the system just as important as or more important than the human beings.

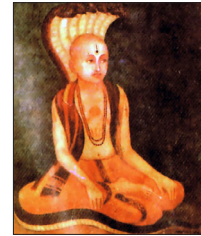
So I've got a way in which I work out value in nature at different levels. It doesn't just attach to human beings, it doesn't just attach to birds, it doesn't just attach to individuals, this bird or that bird, this tree or that tree. It attaches to the processes and to the system, to the community in which these things are fitted together. If you like, I have a sense of what interdependence or solidarity is; the energy with which I'm talking to you at this moment was once the energy of some kind of plant!

Dr. T. D. Singh: Respecting all forms of life is essential, as you mentioned. The

INSIDE



► On the
**SHOULDERS of
GIANTS**



Śrīla Śrīpāda Jayatīrtha

► **VEDANTA and
SCIENCE**



*The Vast
Laboratory of
Nature*

► **NEWS BIRDS**



**Announcement
Summer School 2022
15th - 17th July
Exploring the Foundations
of Science & Beyond**



*Knowledge is invariably a matter of degree:
you cannot put your finger upon even the
simplest datum and say this we know.*

— T. S. Eliot
Nobel Laureate in Literature

To Know about Life, Matter, and their Interactions, is called Knowledge

human being has a well-developed brain and consciousness, plus a big responsibility. We are all sisters and brothers. In the Vedic historical scriptures, it is said that the citizens of the world are not only human beings, but animals, birds and plants are also citizens of the earth planet. We have to treat them equally. We should not discriminate them.

We need to respect nature and the forms of life. There were various university studies showing that the cows you treat very lovingly and with care tend to give more milk than those treated differently. I think feeling, especially among the human beings, is fundamental. If this world could be understood by some scientific study, I think we may have some kind of a new science.

[Excerpt from the book, *Savijnanam* vol-8 —*Scientific Exploration for a Spiritual Paradigm*, Bhaktivedanta Institute, Kolkata]

On the Shoulder of Giants

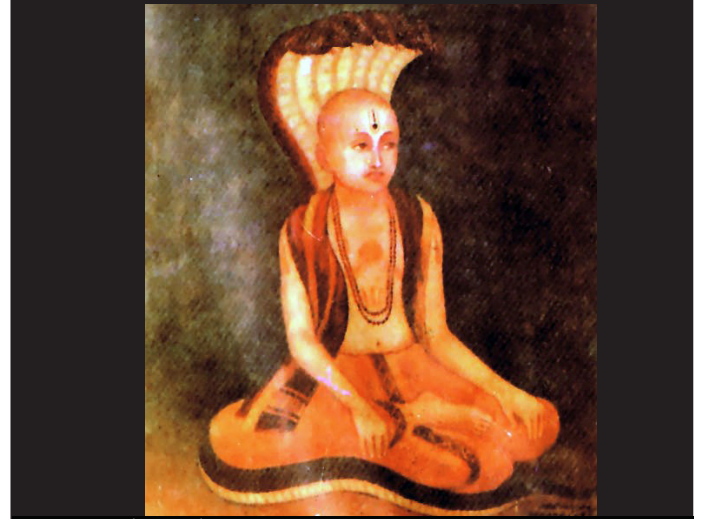
Śrīla Śrīpāda Jayatīrtha

The Tikāchārya

Śrīla Śrīpāda Jayatīrtha is one of the most prominent seers of the *Dvaita* school of Vedānta during the 14th century. We best known his orderly and masterly commentaries of the major works of Śrīla Madvāchārya, the founder of the *Dvaita* School of Vedānta. Hence, Śrīla Śrīpāda Jayatīrtha is considered as the second moon of Śrīla Madhva-Sampradāya, illuminating the skies of dvaita Philosophy — one of the three great sages, "*Munitrayam*" along with Śrīla Madvāchārya and Śrīla Vyāsātīrtha.

Śrīla Śrīpāda Jayatīrtha was born as the Dhoṇḍo Pant to Raghunath Deśpande and Rukmabai in a village named Mangalvedhe, near Paṇḍharpūra, Maharashtra. Raghunath Deśpande was a high-ranking military man, and thus Dhoṇḍo Pant enjoyed the affluent status of a local prince — a keen sportsman, a great horse-rider, and a warrior. But, destiny had something else in store for him. One summer noon, when he was on his routine riding excursions, he stopped at the bank of Bhimarathi river to quench his thirst. Without dismounting from the horse, he rode into the river, bent down, put his mouth, and drank water directly without using his hands (the way animals drink). On the other side of the stream was the saint Śrīla Akṣobhya Tīrtha, a direct disciples of Śrīla Madvāchārya. Watching this uncommon sight, he uttered loudly, "*kim paśuḥu pūrvadehe*" meaning where you an animal in your previous life? Hearing this, Dhoṇḍo Pant stood stunned and suddenly flashed the memory of his past life -- the bullock (*vṛṣabha*) who served the Śrīla Madvāchārya. The bull always accompanied Śrīla Madvāchārya during the preaching tours, carrying his works of literature (*Sarvamūla Grantha*) on his back. The bull also sat amongst the disciples and listened very keenly to his discourses. Thus, Śrīla Madvāchārya had bestowed special blessings upon the bullock to become instrumental in presenting the commentaries' of his works.

This spiritual revelation opened up a new chapter in Dhoṇḍo Pant's life. Immediately, despite his twenty-year-old, he became the disciple of Śrī Akṣobhya Tīrtha who gave him the name Jayatīrtha; later, he accepted the renounced order of life of life (*sannyāsa*). However, when the news reached his parents, they disapproved of their son's decision



Śrīla Śrīpāda Jayatīrtha (1365 – 1388)

and escorted him back home to begin family life. But then, that night, his wife witnessed Jayatīrtha in the form of a gigantic effulgent serpent seated on the bed, and the other family members too were shocked at this sight. All, now seeing in Jayatīrtha, a divine soul (*aṁśa* of Śrī Ananta Śeṣa) sent him back to his spiritual master.

Śrī Akṣobhya Tīrtha earnestly imparted to Jayatīrtha the imports of Vedic scriptures and thus trained him for the mission of expounding the *Madhva siddhānta* to establish its firm foundations in the philosophical world. Next, Jayatīrtha toured all over India and won over scholars from different schools of thought in debates and dialogues. After the departure of his spiritual master, Jayatīrtha became the pontiff of Śrī Uttaradi Maṭha.

Śrīla Śrīpāda Jayatīrtha spent most of his very austere life at Yeragola caves (near Yadgir, Karnataka), writing commentaries on the eighteen Śrīla Madvāchārya's major works. In a brief span of twenty-three years after his initiation, Śrīla Śrīpāda Jayatīrtha penned more than twenty-one treatises. Among some prominent: *Nyāya Sudhā* (nectar), *Tattva -prakāśikā*, *Prameya dīpikā* and *Nyāya dīpikā*.

His compositions display precision and lucid style, and most importantly, he illuminated the thoughts of Śrīla Madvāchārya (*guru - bhāva*) with extreme profoundness. Thus we honor him as Tikāchārya or commentator par-excellence. In the opening *śloka* of his *Nyāya Sudhā*, Śrīla Śrīpāda Jayatīrtha professes: "The only qualification that let me write these commentaries was the grace and compassion of Śrīla Madvāchārya, for I do not possess any Vedic lore nor scholarly skills."

Śrīla Śrīpāda Jayatīrtha spent his last days at Malakhed, Gulbarga District, Mysore, and departed from this mortal world in AD 1388 at the age of forty. His *samadhi* stays at Malakhed, near his guru Śrīla Akṣobhya Tīrtha on the banks of the River Kagina.

Śrīla Śrīpāda Jayatīrtha's works show the highest repository of wisdom; they dispel all the confusions about the nature of reality. They illuminate the *bhakti mārga* (path of devotion) as the simplest means of deliverance for all beings in this material world.

Śrīla Śrīpāda Jayatīrtha teaches us that the Divine Grace constitutes the only way of liberation: indeed, his own life depicts the spiritual master's grace and compassion as the only asset one should seek to become the recipient of the Divine Grace.

The Vast Laboratory of Nature

God has also created this beautiful planet, this earth, an excellent blend of awe and beauty. Human intelligence is endowed with the ability to see the mysterious and beautiful quantum world of fundamental particles. We are also struck with wonder about the immensity of myriads of living microorganisms. These are the gifts of the scientific enterprise. On the other hand, we can also appreciate the wonders of God's creation, such as the high mountains, the waterfalls, the lakes, and the vast oceans with many small and large living beings. We can also enjoy the sights of great forests, varieties of fragrant flowers, and many colorful birds singing and cooing in their melodious and mellifluous voices, in the peaceful bosom of nature, continuously proclaiming the glory of the Almighty. Thoughtful individuals can see the perfect blend of science and spirituality in the vast laboratory of nature. Einstein saw this quality in his journey on the scientific and spiritual path. He remarked, "The most beautiful and most profound emotion we can experience is in the sensation of the mystical. It is a sower of all true science. He to whom this emotion is a stranger, he who can no longer stand rapt in awe, is as good as dead. To know that, what is impenetrable to us really exists, manifesting itself as the highest wisdom and the most radiant beauty which our dull faculties can comprehend only in their most

primitive forms— this knowledge, this feeling is at the center of true religiousness."

In nature, provisions have been made for all forms of life to raise their consciousness from lower to higher conscious state through the process of spiritual evolution. Thus one can see the plan of God for all grades of living entities. Just as an electron cannot be seen, but its existence can be inferred by its symptoms; similarly, material eyes cannot see God, but His existence can be inferred from His creation. The spiritual traditions of the world teach us to discover the purpose, vision and plan of God behind the wonderful creation. Further, they teach us how to act in accordance with His cosmic plan.

Acting in accordance with the spiritual understanding and knowledge would require us to realize the unity of all living entities as being children of God and to appreciate that the cosmos is one whole family. Thus we are all His children tied together by a rigid bond of brotherhood and sisterhood. One can observe this propensity in that many persons keep pet animals and birds and love them as their own family members. Thus spirituality transcends all walls of separation. ...The diversity of this world is a divine creation. We are the caretakers of this creation and not the owners. The more we realize our responsibilities in this regard, the more we will recognize that we are brothers and sisters of a common spiritual family. This will be the meaning of universal brotherhood and sisterhood.

[Excerpt from the book, *The Science of Interreligious Dialogue*, Bhaktivedanta Institute, Kolkata]

Thoughtful individuals can see the perfect blend of science and spirituality in the vast laboratory of nature. ... The diversity of this world is a divine creation.

BOOK

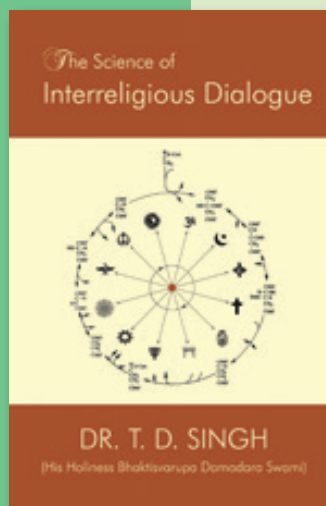
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Our deepest yearnings is to live in a world where the sacred is the foundation of our lives and where the different religions of the world no longer confront but cooperate for peace. Touching briefly the key elements of the science of interfaith action, Dr. Singh presents in this volume the fundamentals of the science of interreligious harmony and understanding, thus broadening the horizons of our minds as well as that of our hearts.

Announcement

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*Reason's last step is to acknowledge that
there are infinitely many things beyond it.*

— Blaise Pascal

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+91 7569865357

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BHAKTIVEDANTA INSTITUTE
Regd: RC-8, Raghunathpur, VIP Road
Kolkata 700 059, WB, INDIA

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Subscriptions & Queries:
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