



Modern Physics and Ancient Faith

Stephen M Barr

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A considerable amount of public debate and media print has been devoted to the “war between science and religion.” In his accessible and eminently readable new book, Stephen M. Barr demonstrates that what is really at war with religion is not science itself, but a philosophy called scientific materialism. *Modern Physics and Ancient Faith* argues that the great discoveries of modern physics are more compatible with the central teachings of Christianity and Judaism about God, the cosmos, and the human soul than with the atheistic viewpoint of scientific materialism.

Scientific materialism grew out of scientific discoveries made from the time of Copernicus up to the beginning of the twentieth century. These discoveries led many thoughtful people to the conclusion that the universe has no cause or purpose, that the human race is an accidental by-product of blind material forces, and that the ultimate reality is matter itself. Barr contends that the revolutionary discoveries of the twentieth century run counter to this line of thought. He uses five of these discoveries—the Big Bang theory, unified field theories, anthropic coincidences, Gödel’s Theorem in mathematics, and quantum theory—to cast serious doubt on the materialist’s view of the world and to give greater credence to Judeo-Christian claims about God and the universe.


Written in clear language, Barr’s rigorous and fair text explains modern physics to general readers without oversimplification. Using the insights of modern physics, he reveals that modern scientific discoveries and religious faith are deeply consonant. Anyone with an interest in science and religion will find *Modern Physics and Ancient Faith* invaluable.

“A modern physicist who writes with extraordinary clarity and verve, and is familiar with the intellectual arguments long used by the ancient faiths, Stephen Barr gives a brilliant defense of the integrity of science in the teeth of its most powerful modern bias, by telling the exciting story of the rise, complacency, and fall of scientific materialism. As his story crackles along, and just at the point of reaching really difficult concepts, he has a knack for inventing illustrations that make one’s inner light bulbs flash again and again.” —**Michael Novak, Winner of the 1994 Templeton Prize for Progress in Religion**

“Barr has produced a brilliant and authoritative defense of Biblical faith in the light of contemporary science. He perceives a serious conflict, not between modern physics and ancient faith, but between religion and materialism. I know of no other book that makes the case against materialism so lucidly, honestly, and deftly.” —**Owen Gingerich, Harvard-Smithsonian Center for Astrophysics**

“Written from the viewpoint of an accomplished physicist, this book is an invaluable contribution to the growing interest in the relationship between science and religion. The arguments are rigorously logical and the documentation is excellent.” —**Robert Scherrer, Ohio State University**

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