

# The Gunas and Science

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*Namaste, Sundari Ji,*

I am writing just to say how lucky I am to find James' website. His teachings bring Vedanta to light in simple words. He is one of the best teachers I have come across after so much searching. Blessed his soul.

One question please, since I read the *Gita* I was a bit confused with quantum physics also. Can you say that the three *gunas* are the same elements as the electron, proton and neutron? Thank you.

~ *Om shanti, Murugan*

Hello Murugan,

I am glad you have found James, and I agree, I think he is one of the very few genuine Vedanta teachers alive today and we are all blessed to know him.

As to your question about the *gunas* and science: the proton, electron and the neutron are not the same as the *gunas* in that the *gunas* are the forces or energies that give rise to the material world. So even though the *gunas* are objects known to you (awareness) like the proton, neutron and electron are objects known to you, the *gunas* are prior to the proton electron and neutron which even though they are microscopic make up the fabric of the material reality which arises from the *gunas*. The proton, electron and neutron could be seen as metaphors for the *gunas*, I suppose, in that *sattva* is the intelligence behind creation, *tamas* the matter creation is made of and *rajas* is the energy that animates life.

Vedanta has no argument with science or quantum physics. As it is applied today, quantum physics focuses mostly on the practical uses of the theory and not on its mysterious implications.

Since ancient times, Western philosophers and thinkers from Aristotle onwards have come up with many esoteric speculations on the nature of the physical reality. In fact, it was a student of Aristotle's, Democritus, who postulated that all objects are made up of increasingly smaller units and named them atoms, meaning "uncuttable," or the smallest unit. What these great minds missed is what the Vedics understood many years prior: that everything (including, of course, the proton, neutron and electron) arises from and dissolves into consciousness which is prior to everything (including the *gunas*) - and consciousness cannot be objectified.

The practical applications of quantum physics have changed our world, yet what quantum physics (if understood correctly) is really pointing to is that the material world has no substance, that consciousness is the substrate. At best, when physicists do talk about consciousness, they see it as an object of perception, missing the point entirely by assuming the mind is conscious, or more accurately, that consciousness is something we have instead of what we are. Quantum physics concurs with what the *Vedas* have been saying all along: there is no "real" creation, there is only an apparent creation. Remember, "real" being defined as "that which is

always present and never changes.” The only constant is consciousness.

~ *Namaste*, Sundari