



RABBI JOEL WOLF, M.D.

INTERVENTIONAL RADIOLOGIST, ORDAINED RABBI, TALMUDIC EXPLORER

Joel Wolf is an interventional radiologist and an ordained orthodox rabbi residing in the Greater Philadelphia area. Since his youth he has studied Talmud, psychology, and philosophy with his father, Daniel Wolf, also a physician and an ordained orthodox rabbi. They both studied under and received their rabbinic ordination from Rabbi Yisroel Chait at Yeshiva B'nei Torah in Far Rockaway, NY.

Joel attended the University of Pittsburgh School of Medicine and completed his radiology residency and interventional radiology fellowship at the hospitals of Albert Einstein College of Medicine in the Bronx, NY. He continues to explore Talmud, philosophy, and other areas of knowledge during his free time.

My Father's Rational Proof of God

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A rational proof of God's existence is premised on the fact that what we can observe (the outcomes of all of the principles of the universe) would have developed quite differently than it did, had there not been an external cause. The only way to reconcile this inconsistency is if there is an existence external to and more primary than the universe. Furthermore, this existence caused the universe to unfold in the ways that we currently observe. In this light, my father, both a Talmudist and a physician, shared with me a proof of God's existence that he thought up when he was a university student.

The second law of thermodynamics states that everything in the universe tends toward disorder, called entropy (often defined as the degree of disorder or randomness in a system). We see this when we release a drop of dye into water. As time goes on, the concentrated drop diffuses through the water and ultimately comes to an equilibrium concentration, which is its most stable state.

If the universe is infinite years old, then that would imply that there is infinite entropy – that the degree of disorder is infinite. If this were true, logically, there would be no observable organization to the universe. However, we can clearly see that this is not true, as everywhere we look, we see order. For example, the cell is an organized entity made up of proteins that are organized molecules, organs are organized cells, and animals are multi-organ systems that operate in concert. If order were to fail, these organisms would cease to exist.

This organization is not limited to the world of biology. Every aspect of our universe demonstrates order. There are ecological systems, weather systems, and cosmological systems, to name a few, all built on the interaction of multiple sets of principles.

Clearly, infinite disorder – entropy – does not exist. That leaves only two possibilities: Either, we have disproved the second law of thermodynamics and can throw out hundreds of years of scientific inquiry. Or, we must assume that there is an existence outside of the universe that caused it to come to be, and that designed the universe in a way that allowed ordered systems to emerge despite the second law of thermodynamics. It is through this order that we can study the universe and see scientific principles at play. By analyzing the order of the universe, we gain insight, albeit rough and imprecise, into the nature of this external existence. We call that existence God.