

THE BIG BANG THEORY—A BIBLICAL CRITIQUE

Bert Thompson, Ph.D., Brad Harrub, Ph.D., and Branyon May

Cosmology—the study of the cosmos—certainly is not inherently wrong. And, for that matter, science itself by no means implies antagonism toward God. However, it is what we humans have done with our “scientific” pursuits and our cosmological egos that has sent us into a digression from our Creator.

The Big Bang Theory has been desperately hanging on, trying to cling to its status as a set of hypotheses for the origin of the cosmos. We say “hypotheses” because, as surely is evident by now, the Big Bang Theory is not just one theory, but instead represents an entire history of speculations by its proponents. No matter what name is in vogue—standard, oscillating, inflationary, etc.—we should, as Hoyle and Wickramasinghe urged, “be suspicious of a theory if more and more hypotheses are needed to support it” (1981, p. 135). It seems that most of the time, the evolutionists’ theories have come as an insurgence—bursting quickly onto the scene, and then quietly fading away. Why, then, has the Big Bang Theory been able to hold on to its grasp through so heavy a tempest of criticism? In her book on the Big Bang Theory, Karen Fox’s admission speaks volumes.

There’s no doubt that the big bang theory is accepted so universally because it is taught essentially as fact. We’ve all learned the earth is round, and few ever think to try to prove that detail for ourselves. When the same science teacher tells you the universe began with a bang, most people accept it as readily. The majority of the world population that accepts the big bang theory does so unquestioningly (2002, p. 119).

The ultimate question in the mind of a Christian should be: “Can I, as a faithful child of God, accept, defend, and advocate the Big Bang theory?” To be sure, there are those who would answer such a question in the affirmative. Several prominent examples come to mind.

“PROGRESSIVE CREATIONISTS” WEIGH IN ON SUPPORT FOR THE BIG BANG THEORY

Hugh N. Ross is the founder and president of Reasons to Believe, a non-profit work devoted to Bible-science issues. Ross received his Ph.D. in astronomy from the University of Toronto, and served for a time as a minister at the Congregational Church in Sierra Madre, California. He is a prolific writer, whose book, *The Fingerprint of God*, made the Christian Booksellers Association’s list of best-selling paperbacks. Ross also is an accomplished speaker and television personality (who was featured on the front cover of the June 2003 issue of *Charisma* magazine as the “science guy”).

More important, however, is the fact that, currently, Dr. Ross is the leading, most eloquent, and most visible spokesman for the doctrine known as “progressive creationism.” According to most of its proponents, progressive creationism is opposed to atheistic evolution, but also is opposed to a literal, historical interpretation of the Genesis record of creation. Ross himself has defined progressive creationism as “the hypothesis that God has increased the complexity of life on earth by successive creations of new forms over billions of years while miraculously changing the earth to accommodate the new life” (1990a).

Ross accepts and promotes, among numerous other false ideas: (1) the Big Bang view of the origin of the Universe; (2) an

ancient, multi-billion-year-old Earth and Universe; (3) the Day-Age Theory, which suggests that the days of Genesis 1 were actually millions or billions of years each, rather than 24-hours in duration; (4) a local Noachic flood, rather than a global inundation; and (5) the integrity of the evolutionary geologic column in regard to its stipulations that life flowed from simple to complex (see Ross, 1989; 1990a; 1990b; 1990-1991; 1993; 1994; Van Bebbler and Taylor, 1996). Incredibly, Dr. Ross actually suggests that his views are based on a literal interpretation of the Bible. Thus, when many Bible believers hear him stress that he accepts the literal nature of the biblical record, their guard is down and they are less likely to detect the serious nature of the numerous errors he advocates.

[We believe it is vitally important that people see where positions like Ross’ eventually lead. In his book, *The Fingerprint of God* (which is an overt apologetic for progressive creationism), Ross discussed the Old Testament character, Job, who, he suggested, “*without the aid of scriptures*, and in opposition to the religion of his peers, discerned all the elements of ‘the gospel,’ the good news of how man can find eternal life in God. **The creation, thus, reveals all the necessary steps to develop a right relationship with God**” (1989, pp. 181-182, italics in orig., emp. added). According to Ross, then, God’s revelation in nature supersedes His revelation in Scripture. Whenever there is an apparent conflict, natural revelation assumes a position of preeminence—since, after all, it is based on **empirical** evidence. In essence, then, man no longer needs God’s special revelation from within the Scriptures to instruct

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him on something as important as the plan of salvation, since the creation “reveals all the necessary steps to develop a right relationship with God.” According to this view, the verdict of “science” is allowed to sit in judgment on the Scriptures. For an extensive examination and refutation of this inaccurate dichotomy, see Thompson, 2000, pp. 90-98.]

Dr. Ross’ defense of the Big Bang has been both extremely public and extremely vehement. He claims that the Big Bang occurred 17 billion years ago (plus or minus 3 billion years). And, he asserts that the Big Bang has been “undeniably” proven (see: Ross, 1989, pp. 158-159; 1990-1991; 1994, pp. 91-118,129).

Hugh Ross, however, is not the only religionist defending the Big Bang. John N. Clayton is a high school teacher from South Bend, Indiana, who is trained in geology. Clayton presents a seminar, *Does God Exist?*, around the country, and publishes a small, bi-monthly journal by the same name. He, too, accepts and promotes (among other things) the Big Bang view of the origin of the Universe, an ancient, multi-billion-year-old Earth and Universe, and the integrity of the evolutionary geologic column in regard to its stipulations that life flowed from simple to complex. [Clayton, in fact, is the sole architect of a concept known as the “Modified Gap Theory,” which attempts to insert vast amounts of time in between Genesis 1:1 and 1:2, but without any Gap Theory destruction; see Thompson, 1977, pp. 177-194; Jackson and Thompson, 1992, pp. 11-120; Thompson, 2000, pp. 282-296.] Oddly, he, too, suggests that each of his views is based on a strict, literal interpretation of the Bible. In speaking about the fact that Christians definitely can accept the Big Bang Theory, he wrote in the September/October 1999 issue of his *Does God Exist?* journal: “**We have tried over and over again to point out to readers that the big bang theory is not at odds with the Bible nor with the concept of God as Creator**” (26[5]:12b, emp. added). Clayton has indeed tried “over and over again” to get people to accept the Big Bang. Almost a decade earlier, he had argued strenuously for the validity of a Big Bang-type concept, suggesting that scientists can accurately “theorize back to 10⁴³ seconds” (1991, 18[1]:8).

[Again, it is vitally important to understand exactly where positions like Clayton’s ultimately lead. In the October 1976 issue of *Does God Exist?*, Clayton penned an article titled “‘Flat Earth’ Bible Study Techniques,” which was a scathing rebuke of any and all Christians who dared to accept the Genesis account of Creation at

face value. In that article, he declared that any view which holds that Exodus 20:11 is referring to a literal six-day creation is “a very shallow conclusion” that is “inconsistent with the Genesis record as well as with other parts of the Bible” (1976a, p. 5). Clayton even went so far as to suggest that if a person actually believes Exodus 20:11 means what it says—i.e., that God created the heavens, the Earth, and all that is in them in six days—such would be comparable to believing in the false, antiquated concept of a flat Earth! We do not believe it was coincidental, then, that the same year Clayton authored the above-mentioned article, he wrote in his book, *The Source*: “**I do not contend that it can be conclusively proven to 20th Century Americans that the Bible is inspired...**” (1976b, p. 89, emp. added; he also made the same statement in the 1978 edition, p. 79). Once more, the verdict of “science” has been allowed to sit in judgment on the Bible. Is any additional proof needed to document where the compromise of progressive creationism finally leads? Hardly—but read on nevertheless.]

John Polkinghorne is a British theoretical physicist, former Master of Queen’s College at Cambridge, and an ordained minister in the Church of England. He is also, as Larry Witham noted in his book, *Where Darwin Meets the Bible*, “the only cleric in the Royal Society, the elite association of scientists” (2002, p. 47). There is a reason for the fact that he has been welcomed by such a prestigious body of scientists: **his scientific views take precedence over his religious beliefs**. As he put it: “So I believe in a form of theistic evolution” (as quoted in Witham, p. 47). In his 1986 volume, *One World: The Interaction of Science and Theology*, he wrote: “The claims that the universe originated in the big bang and that God made the world are clearly not in direct conflict.... Thus for me and many other scientists of Christian conviction it is God and the big bang” (pp. 65,66, emp. in orig.). [Once more, it is interesting to see where such an attitude leads. Less than ten pages later in his book, Polkinghorne wrote:

As far as Christianity is concerned two things need to be said. The first is that **the Christian is not committed to believe in the literal truth of every miraculous event recorded in the Bible**. An understanding of the role of myth and legend enables us to accept some stories as just that, pictorially valuable **but not historically accurate** (p. 74, emp. added).

Our point is this: the person who unhesitatingly compromises Genesis 1-11, likewise will not hesitate to compromise the remainder of the Bible.]

Numerous additional examples could be offered as well. Gerald L. Schroeder, an MIT-trained Israeli nuclear physicist, authored a book titled *Genesis and the Big Bang*, in which he contended that there is no contradiction between the biblical account of creation and the Big Bang Theory (1990; see also Ostling, 1992, pp. 42-43). In 1988, J.D. Thomas, former chairman of the Bible department at Abilene Christian University, edited a book titled *Evolution and Faith*. Documented evidence had been published which proved that two professors in ACU's biology department had been teaching evolution as fact (see Thompson, 1986). In an effort to stem the tide of criticism that resulted from the publication of that evidence, the University's administration suggested that various professors and board members needed to write a book to "set the record straight." It quickly became apparent, however, that the book failed miserably in its attempts to exonerate the University, because its contents established all the more firmly the charges that had been proffered against its professors. [After reading the book, the reaction of many people was, to echo the words of Eliphaz, "Thine own mouth condemneth thee" (Job 15:6).]

One entire chapter of the book (by physician Michael E. Sadler) was dedicated to the proposition that "experimental evidence indicates that we live in a universe that was created over 10 billion years ago, after which the heavier elements were formed. The age of our solar system is about 4-5 billion years." Dr. Sadler concluded:

The Bible does not say how old the earth is, much less the solar system or the universe. **To judge as heretics all those who believe that the present universe has evolved from a big bang is unfair, and creates controversy over something that is certainly not a central part of Christianity** (1988, p. 93, emp. added).

In the next chapter of the book, ACU board member and California university professor Joe T. Ator told the reader not to place "unnecessarily restrictive" limitations on Genesis 1. It came as no great surprise, then, to see him elaborate on this by suggesting that the "days" of Genesis 1 were not really "days" at all, but rather were long ages of time (1988, pp. 96-97), from which he concluded: "The data just reviewed has [sic] driven scientists to the conclusion that the universe must have an age between fifteen and twenty billion years" (p. 105). His entire chapter was dedicated to the concept that "one should not 'force fit' his or her own ideas into the brief, beautiful, pristine creation account in Genesis" (p. 115), and then he proceeded to do exactly that, ignoring plain biblical evidence which refuted the erroneous concepts he presented. Ator

argued for the scientific accuracy of the Big Bang, not just in this 1988 book, but also in one that he penned a decade later (see Ator, 1998, pp. 62-86).

Four years after ACU released *Evolution and Faith*, Arlie Hoover (an ACU professor) argued in a similar fashion in an article he wrote for the *Gospel Advocate* titled "God and the Big Bang."

It is entirely possible, though not at all firmly established, that God used a big bang as His method of creation. You cannot affirm it as a certainty, but neither can you deny it apodictically. Because the Bible does not specify how God did it, we are left to choose the hypothesis that seems to have the best supporting material.... [N]othing in the biblical doctrine excludes the big bang (1992, 134[9]:34-35).

The issue under discussion here is whether a Christian can accept evolutionary offshoots like the Big Bang. But that is not how compromisers like Ross, Clayton, Sadler, Ator, and Hoover want people to see it. In fact, as Ator lamented:

It should be remembered that the astronomical evidence strongly indicating that the universe had a beginning point and has existed for billions of years neither confirms nor contradicts those brief statements in Genesis about the sequence and identity of created life forms.... **The Big Bang theory should be viewed as a totally separate concept from the theory of organic evolution** (1988, pp. 112, 103, emp. added).

Odd, is it not, how Christians frequently fail to see what non-Christians see so clearly. As Jesus Himself said: "The sons of this world are for their own generation wiser than the sons of the light" (Luke 16:8). So true—and so sad! The late, eminent evolutionist of the Rockefeller University, geneticist Theodosius Dobzhansky, admitted:

Evolution comprises all the states of development of the universe; the cosmic, biological, and human or cultural developments. **Attempts to restrict the concept of evolution to biology are gratuitous.** Life is a product of the evolution of inorganic matter, and man is a product of the evolution of life (1967, 155:409, emp. added).

It simply will not do to assert, as Ator did, that "the Big Bang theory should be viewed as a totally separate concept from the theory of organic evolution." The Big Bang Theory is as much a part of its evolutionary heritage as the idea of men evolving from ape-like ancestors. Denying that fact does not make it go away, as Dobzhansky so eloquently pointed out.

The truth is, while most Christians never would openly consider accepting evolutionists' teachings, people like Ross, Clay-

ton, Sadler, Ator, and Hoover offer smoothly worded compromises that seemingly allow Christians to believe in **both God and** evolutionary theory. In the face of what many believe is "overwhelming scientific evidence," and not wanting to offend either their religious friends on the one hand, or evolutionists on the other, many Christians have bought into concepts and theories that try to "marry" the two. The situation is worsened by the fact that some (like the men mentioned above) are quick to point out that belief in various aspects of evolution should pose no problem for a Christian. In the epilogue of his book, *Can a Darwinian be a Christian?*, philosopher Michael Ruse asked: "Can a Darwinian be a Christian? Absolutely! Is it always easy for a Darwinian to be a Christian? No, but whoever said that the worthwhile things in life are easy?" (2001, p. 217).

Of course, there always have been those, like Ruse, Ross, Polkinghorne, Schroeder, and Clayton (who even goes so far as to present a lecture titled "Evolution's Proof of God"), who assert that belief in both creation and evolution is possible because, they say, certain Christians are living proof of exactly that—people who **do** believe in both. "Can't we be Christian evolutionists?" they ask.

In his 2002 book, *Where Darwin Meets the Bible: Creationists and Evolutionists in America*, Larry Witham (who is a reporter and senior writer for the national desk of *The Washington Times*) told of an interview he conducted with Duncan Porter, a botany professor at Virginia Technological University. As Witham explained, since Porter's arrival at Virginia Tech in 1975, he has attended the Episcopal Church (even though he was reared as a Methodist, and professed to being an agnostic during most of his professional career). Porter now claims, however: "In fact, I am a Christian, and I am an evolutionist" (as quoted in Witham, p. 13). **But saying it is so does not make it so!** In his book, *King of Creation*, Henry Morris dealt with this very issue:

Yes, no doubt it is possible to be a Christian and an evolutionist. Likewise, one can be a Christian thief, or a Christian adulterer, or a Christian liar! Christians can be inconsistent and illogical about many things, but that doesn't make them right! (1980, pp. 83-84).

The question for a person who accepts the Bible as the inspired Word of God is not whether he can hold to a belief that incorporates evolutionary theory, but, rather, whether he can do so and remain **logically** consistent, without impugning the Bible or its Author. Or, to put it another way: "**Is it right?**"

Our answer to such a question is a resounding, “**No, it is not right!**” Faithful Christians cannot believe in, advocate, and defend the Big Bang Theory. Astronomer Paul Steidl commented:

No astronomers would ever think of the big bang as the creation event of Genesis. The big bang was invented specifically for the purpose of doing away with the creation event. An astronomer would laugh at the naïveté of anyone who chose to equate the two events (1979, p. 197).

Indeed, evolutionary astronomers **have** been laughing. Anyone who takes the time to surf the Internet and view the comments from those within the evolutionary camp about the suggested compromises of people like Hugh Ross, John Clayton, and others, will see very quickly how true Steidl’s comments are.

Evolutionist Paul Davies, in a discussion of the Big Bang, stated that this theory of origins “differs greatly in detail from the biblical version.” He then quoted Ernan McMullin of Notre Dame University: “What one **cannot say** is, first, that the Christian doctrine of creation ‘supports’ the Big Bang model, or second, that the Big Bang model ‘supports’ the doctrine of creation” (1983, pp. 17,20, emp. added).

Why, then, do some religionists accept this theory (a horribly weak one at that), which was developed with the explicit intent of explaining away the biblical record? Likely, there are several reasons, but surely, counted among them would be these. First, we suspect that many believe in the Big Bang because, as Karen Fox pointed out, it is taught almost everywhere as fact. Some poor souls have been intimidated by the constant harangue that flows freely from those within the scientific community, suggesting that the evidence supporting the Big Bang Theory is so strong that no one with an ounce of common sense would deny it. Second, no doubt some Christians accept the Big Bang Theory unquestioningly because they have not given careful and sustained consideration to the paucity of evidence upon which it is based; nor have they given due consideration to the consequences of believing in such a theory. The apostle Paul warned of blindly accepting a dogma, when he exhorted the Thessalonian Christians to “prove all things; hold fast that which is good; abstain from every form of evil” (1 Thessalonians 5:21-22). With that in mind, we would like to present the following information for your consideration.

THE PROCESS OF CREATION HAS BEEN SET —BY GOD HIMSELF

The argument frequently is made that by rejecting evolutionary concepts (such as the Big Bang Theory), Christians are limiting the omnipotence of God. Jehovah’s incredible power is plainly evident as a result of His creation (Romans 1:20-21). But it is equally as evident in the infallible nature of His Word. When the Bible speaks, its authority is without reproach, and what God establishes is to be followed. By following God’s Word, Christians are not limiting Him, but instead are relying on what He has said (cf. Proverbs 1:7; John 12:48; 1 Corinthians 1:18-21).

The principle—that we are not to change God’s Word—runs throughout both the Old and New Testaments. The psalmist wrote: “The sum of thy word is truth; And every one of thy righteous ordinances endureth for ever” (119:160). Through inspiration, the apostle Peter provided the reason for following the Bible exclusively: “His divine power hath granted unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness” (2 Peter 1:3). There is no need to change or adapt God’s Word; the creative process for our origin has been set—by God Himself. Consider, as proof of that, the following.

(1) Creation was accomplished through divine fiat, not by a “chaotic explosion.” God’s design, and method, of creation are evident: “By the word of Jehovah were the heavens made, and all the host of them by the breath of his mouth” (Psalm 33:6). God spoke, and by His utterance, creation occurred. Nowhere in the Genesis account (nor anywhere else in Scripture, for that matter) is reference ever made to some sort of “primeval explosion.” When God commanded the creation of the Sun, Moon, and stars on day four, the event did not require billions of years, but was completely finished **that very day**. In fact, the whole of creation was brought into existence by God’s command, as evinced by His words recorded in Genesis 1:

And God said, Let there be light.... Let there be a firmament in the midst of the waters...let the dry land appear.... Let the earth put forth grass, herbs yielding seed, and fruit-trees.... Let there be lights in the firmament of heaven. ...Let the waters swarm with swarms of living creatures.... Let the earth bring forth living creatures after their kind. ...Let us make man in our image, after our likeness... (vss. 3,6,9,11,14,20,24, 26).

God’s **immediate** creation of a veritable plethora of living forms represents an obvious and serious contradiction to the Big Bang Theory, which demands an enor-

mous and intense explosion of matter, followed by eons of “evolutionary tinkering” required to produce and perfect nature’s varied life forms. Creation by fiat also opposes the viewpoint of theistic evolutionists and progressive creationists, both of whom assert that the commencement of creation was merely an “initial act” by God, subsequently followed by a “policy of non-interference” that allowed for a fully naturalistic progression to occur from that point on. The fact is, the two opposing views—the Big Bang Theory and the biblical account of Creation—cannot **both** be accepted. The one postulates primeval chaos and disorder, billions of years, and random processes. The other speaks of purpose and order, instantaneous creation, intention, and intricate design. The Big Bang Theory and the Genesis account of Creation thus are diametrically opposed and mutually exclusive. Christ Himself warned: “No man can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon” (Matthew 6:24; cf. 1 Kings 18:21).

(2) The Bible and evolutionary theories paint very different pictures of the creative process. In the Big Bang scenario, there was an explosive beginning, which was marked by the slow and gradual collection of matter that eventually formed the stars, Sun, Moon, Earth, etc. Furthermore, the Big Bang teaches that the Sun was formed long before the Earth, which makes the Earth a relative newcomer to the solar system, compared to the Sun.

In contrast to such a concept, we read in Genesis 1:1: “In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.” The word “heavens,” as used here, however, does not include the formation of the Sun, Moon or stars, as is made clear by other portions of the Creation account. In Scripture, there are three particular applications for the term “heavens.” There are the heavens of God’s own dwelling place (Hebrews 9:24), the atmospheric heavens immediately above the Earth (Jeremiah 4:25), and the sidereal heavens in outer space (Isaiah 13:10). From the context, the first two of the three applications can be ruled out. God obviously is not referring to the creation of His own abode. Nor is Genesis 1:1 speaking of the atmospheric heavens, because Genesis 1:6ff. informs us that they were created later, on day two. As George Pember correctly noted: “The heaven mentioned in the first verse of Genesis is the starry heaven, not the firmament immediately surrounding our earth” (1876, p. 30).

The Bible thus teaches that the Earth and the sidereal heavens (minus the heavenly bodies that now reside in them) were created **first**, while the Sun, Moon, and stars were created later on the fourth day of Creation (Genesis 1:1, 14-16). This quite obviously places the Sun's creation **after** that of the Earth, while, once again, the Big Bang Theory advocates exactly the opposite. Those who are sympathetic to evolutionary cosmology purport that God was the Initiator of the Big Bang, but then allowed the creation of celestial and terrestrial objects to follow their "naturalistic" course. But again we ask: Is this what the Bible says? Hardly. The Bible designates both the **design** and the **order** of Creation (Genesis 1 and 2)—neither of which correlates with the Big Bang Theory. And that brings us to our next point.

(3) Even a small child recognizes the difference between fire and water. When the initial, infinitely small singularity of the Big Bang erupted, it allegedly sent a primeval fireball hurtling outward through space. Estimated to be at a temperature of 10^{32} degrees Celsius, the fireball expanded, slowly cooled, and eventually coalesced into the planet Earth. How, exactly, does this compare with the biblical account? Genesis 1:1-2 records that the Earth, from the moment of its creation, was enshrouded with water. Is there any difference between **a beginning in fire** and **a beginning in water**? If so, then there also is a difference between the origin that the Big Bang offers and the origin that the Bible presents.

TIMING IS EVERYTHING

Evolutionists regularly refer to time as "the hero of the plot" (Wald, 1979, p. 294). With the passage of time, they suggest, the probability for naturalistic processes increases. The second law of thermodynamics states that as time passes, entropy increases. Entropy is simply a measure of disorder, which does not fit the increasing complexity and structural progress required by the Big Bang (or any other evolutionary theory). Time is not the **hero** of the plot, but the **antagonist**. When comparing Scripture to science, the time element involved is extremely important. If a concept—any concept—finds itself at odds with God's inspired Word, then one of them must change. But the Scriptures are not subject to change (Psalm 119:160; Matthew 24:35).

(1) God spoke plainly about how the Cosmos—the Universe and its array of complex systems—came into existence during the **six days** of the Creation week (Genesis 1; Exodus 20:11). But, in an effort to reconcile the Bible with evolutionary cosmologies, a number of arguments have been set forth. Certain theistic evolutionists and progressive creationists, for example, have argued that the Creation events are not necessarily in chronological order (see Willis, 1979, p. 92). Clearly, however, the creation acts **are** recorded in a chronological order, because God specifically said that "there was evening and there was morn-

ing, the ___ day" (Genesis 1:5, 8, 13, et al.). He also **sequentially numbered the days**, thereby showing His ordered precision. In short, each day was finalized as having an evening and a morning, was designated a place in the sequence by its number, and was pronounced "good" by God Himself. Who are we to take the events, or the days on which they occurred, out of the order in which they have been divinely placed, in an attempt to accommodate the pseudoscientific theories of our age?

Some theistic evolutionists and progressive creationists have opted to defend what is known as the Day-Age Theory, which suggests that the "days" of Genesis 1 were not literal days, but instead were ages or eons, each of which was billions of years in duration (see Clayton, n.d.; 1976b, pp. 116, 146-147; 1978, p. 6; Ross, 1994, pp. 45-90; Woods, 2001, p. 490). According to the Bible, God created the heavens, the Earth, and all that is in them in six days, and then rested on the seventh. This also served as an example for the Jewish workweek: "Six days shalt thou labor, and do all thy work; but the seventh day is a Sabbath unto Jehovah thy God: in it thou shalt not do any work" (Exodus 20:9-10). The Jews understood the parallelism being made with the Creation week. Thus, they understood, and correctly made the application, that when God spoke of six days in which to work, He meant six literal 24-hour days. No rational Jew believed that God was instructing them to work for billions of years, after which they would rest on the Sabbath for an indefinite time. According to this line of thinking, the Jews would be incapable of ever fulfilling God's commandment to "keep" and "observe the Sabbath" (Exodus 31:16). However, the Big Bang makes the days of creation null and void by taking away their logical meaning. Those who hold to some variation of the Big Bang Theory must distort the biblical time frame in order to make room for evolution's vastly divergent timeline. The Israelites correctly understood the context, and thus made proper application, of God's commandments. A simple adherence to the principles of biblical learning can solve this current problem: "For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning" (Romans 15:4).

At the close of each day, God used the descriptive phrase, "there was evening and there was morning." Why did He use this exact terminology? If these were simply indefinite periods of geologic time, then what is the significance of having "an evening and a morning"? God, in employing this phrase, was emphasizing the **literal, chronological** nature of what He was doing. Once again, the Jews provide an exam-



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ple that proves the importance of timing. The Jewish day was measured as an evening and a morning. For them, the day began at sunset (approximately six o'clock), continued through evening and morning, and concluded at six o'clock the following day. The Jews not only used God's example to define their **week**, but also their **day** as well. Big Bang proponents have garbled the understanding of these simple terms, as used by the Creator Himself. The task for the Christian, then, is to focus on these words in the Bible without the nagging influence of evolutionary cosmologists. We must ask ourselves questions such as: What is God saying? How did the Jews make application? And how should we apply it today?

Still others have promoted such concepts as: (a) the Gap Theory (see Thomas, 1961, p. 54; Custance, 1970), which places an immense "gap" of time between Genesis 1:1 and Genesis 1:2, along with a worldwide destruction allegedly caused by a battle between God and Satan; (b) the Modified Gap Theory (see Clayton, 1976b, pp. 147-148), which proposes the same immense gap of time, yet without a worldwide destruction; or (c) the Multiple Gap Theory (see England, 1972, pp. 110-111), which places an immense gap of time between each successive day of creation. Each of these theories fails the test when compared to the truth contained within God's Word (for refutations of each, see Thompson, 2000).

(2) Consistent with the diversity of evolutionary methodology, various theories have their own approximations of the age of the Universe, ranging anywhere from the currently popular figure of 13.7 billion years to an eternal Universe. Evolutionary cosmology purports a slow, gradual progression that is punctuated by lengthy periods of time until conditions become adequate for stellar objects to form. The periods between star formation, planetary formation, and galaxy formation are estimated to range in the billions of years. In any of these scenarios, the Earth allegedly formed 4 to 5 **billion** years ago, with man arriving on the scene much later, at somewhere between 3 and 4 **million** years ago. Are any of these naturalistically based scenarios consistent with the Bible? No, they are not.

According to Big Bang dogma, a vast period of time (of more than 4 billion years) separated the origin of the Earth from that of mankind. Yet the Scriptures teach that **everything** was created within the six days of the Creation week, as first recorded in Genesis 1-2, and later reaffirmed by Exodus 20:11 and Exodus 31:17. The Scriptures also affirm that the human family came into existence the same week as the Universe (Genesis 1; Exodus 20:11; 31:17). Thus, the point is made quite clearly that the Cos-

mos, the Earth, and **all** of the Creation were brought into existence during the same week. Man therefore has existed from the beginning of the Creation (cf. Isaiah 40:21; Matthew 19:4; Mark 10:6; Luke 11:50; Romans 1:20-21). It was on the sixth day of Creation, in fact, that God made man and woman. "And God said, 'Let us make man in our image, after our likeness.' ...And God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them" (Genesis 1:26-27). Jesus Himself declared: "**...from the beginning of the creation, male and female made he them**" (Mark 10:6, emp. added). As God's Son, and the Creative Agent through which such events were accomplished (cf. John 1:1ff.; Colossians 1:16), He should know!

Christ thus dated the first humans from the Creation week. The Greek word for "beginning" is *arché*, and is used of "**absolute, denoting the beginning of the world and of its history, the beginning of creation.**" The Greek word for "creation" is *ktiseos*, which denotes "**the sum-total of what God has created**" (Cremer, 1962, pp. 113, 114, 381, emp. in orig.). Bloomfield noted that "creation" in Mark 10:6 "signifies 'the things created,' the world or universe" (1837, 1:197-198). Furthermore, Paul affirmed the following:

For the invisible things of him **since the creation of the world** are clearly seen, being perceived through the things that are made, even his everlasting power and divinity; that they may be without excuse (Romans 1:20, emp. added).

The apostle declared that **from the creation of the world** the invisible things of God have been: (a) clearly seen; and (b) perceived. The phrase, "since the creation of the world," is translated from the Greek, *apo ktiseos kosmou*. As a preposition, *apo* is employed "to denote the point from which something begins" (Arndt and Gingrich, 1957, p. 86). The term "world" is from the Greek, *kosmos*, and refers to "the orderly universe" (Arndt and Gingrich, p. 446). R.C. Trench observed that the *kosmos* is "the material universe...in which man lives and moves, which exists for him and of which he constitutes the moral centre" (1890, pp. 215-216). The term "perceived" is translated from the Greek *noeo*, which is used to describe rational, human intelligence. The phrase, "clearly seen" is an intensified form of *horao*, a word that "gives prominence to the discerning mind" (Thayer, 1962, p. 452). Both "perceived" and "clearly seen" are present tense forms, and as such denote "the continued manifestation of the being and perfections of God, by the works of creation from the beginning" (MacKnight, 1960, 1:187).

Who observed and perceived the things that were made "from the beginning" of the creation? If no human existed on this planet for billions of years (because man is a "relative newcomer to the Earth"—to use John Clayton's exact words; see Clayton, 1968, p. 2), who was observing—with rational, human intelligence—these phenomena? Paul undoubtedly was teaching that **man** has existed since the creation of the world, and has possessed the capacity to comprehend the truth regarding the existence of the Creator; accordingly, those who refuse to glorify Him are without excuse (cf. Psalm 14:1; Romans 1:20-21). It likewise is inexcusable for one who professes to believe that the Bible is God's inspired Word to ignore such verses as these—or to twist and wrest them to try to make them say something they never were intended to say—merely to defer instead to evolutionary cosmology (or geology) in an attempt to defend the concept of an ancient Earth. Yet examples of that very thing are all too prevalent, as we have amply documented.

ORDER MATTERS

The Bible provides a well-ordered chronology for the creation of the Cosmos. However, it is not the same order as that suggested by evolutionists, as the following comparison clearly shows.

(1) Each evolutionary theory, whether it commences *in medias res* (in the middle of things) or assumes an initial creation from nothing, attests to a creative progression from simple to complex, completely disregarding the second law of thermodynamics. The Big Bang Theory, for example, suggests that the Universe started with a chaotic explosion, which then proceeded toward order. The Bible teaches exactly the opposite. God created the Universe as a beautiful and orderly masterpiece, which has been degenerating toward disorder during the intervening millennia.

In three different places in the Bible (Hebrews 1:11; Isaiah 51:6; Psalm 102:26), the indication is that the Earth, "like a garment, is wearing out." This, of course, is exactly what the second law of thermodynamics states. This law, also known as the law of increasing entropy, governs all material processes; there is not a single known exception. The law states that as time progresses, entropy increases. Entropy is the scientific word (from a Greek term meaning to "turn in on oneself") which indicates that things become more disorderly, more random, more unstructured. Everything is running down and wearing out. Energy is becoming less available for work. Theoretically speaking, the Universe, left to itself, will experience a "heat death" when no more energy is available for use.

(2) In their attempt to circumvent God, certain cosmologists invented the concept of an eternal Universe, to which the Quasi-Steady-State Theory and the Oscillating Big Bang model adhere. For the evolutionists, it was a quick and convenient way to eliminate God. Although the idea of an eternal Universe has been refuted and dismantled scientifically (see Thompson, 1992; 2001; 2002), some scientists are “restructuring” the idea, in hopes of bringing it back into the evolutionary mainstream. But the Bible provides overwhelming testimony to the fact that the Universe is not eternal, and that God cannot be taken out of the equations. When Genesis 1:1 records, “In the beginning **God created** the heavens and the earth,” that indicates there was a beginning—brought about by God! Additionally, the promise of Christ’s return (John 14:3), combined with the apostle Peter’s account of the end of the world (2 Peter 3:10), declares God’s intention for an ending. Eternity, by definition, has neither a beginning nor an ending. Thus, with both of these requirements, the Bible negates the eternal existence of the Universe. Within the pages of His inspired Word, God has informed us about His creative activities. For us to exchange His testimony for evolutionary pseudoscience represents a terrible travesty indeed.

CONCLUSION

Science is based on observation and reproducibility. But when pressed for the reproducible, empirical data that document the claim of a self-created Universe, scientists and philosophers alike are at a loss to produce those data. Perhaps this is why Alan Guth lamented: “In the end, I must admit that questions of plausibility are not logically determinable and depend somewhat on intuition” (1988, 11[2]:76)—which is little more than a fancy way of saying, “I certainly **wish** this were true, but I could not **prove** it to you to save my life.” To suggest that the Universe created itself is to posit a self-contradictory position. Sproul addressed this when he wrote:

For something to bring itself into being it must have the power of being within itself. It must at least have enough causal power to cause its own being. If it derives its being from some other source, then it clearly would not be either self-existent or self-created. It would be, plainly and simply, an effect. Of course, the problem is complicated by the other necessity we’ve labored so painstakingly to establish: It would have to have the causal power of being before it was. It would have to have the power of being before it had any being with which to exercise that power (1994, p. 180).

The Universe is not eternal or self-created. Rather, it was created—which implies a Creator. That Creator is **not** the Big Bang, or any permutation of it. John Gribbin summarized our view on this matter when he wrote: “Perhaps cosmologists have been charging up a blind alley for the past quarter of a century, and there never was a big bang at all” (1986, 110[1511]:30). Yes, Dr. Gribbin, they have. And no, there wasn’t.

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ANNOUNCING: ADVANCED-LEVEL CHRISTIAN EVIDENCES CORRESPONDENCE COURSE

In my “Note from the Editor” in the March 2001 issue of *Reason & Revelation*, I announced the availability of the new Apologetics Press introductory-level *Christian Evidences Correspondence Course* that Kyle Butt and I had co-authored. A few months later, in the October 2001 issue of *R&R*, I announced the publication of the intermediate-level course, which Eric Lyons and I co-wrote. In this month’s “Note from the Editor,” I am pleased to announce the last installment of this popular correspondence course series.

All of the courses have ten, 8-page lessons, each of which has been printed in full color on enameled paper in a large, easy-to-read typestyle, and contains professional artwork. In the introductory-level course, we intentionally wrote the lessons in an everyday vocabulary that would be appealing to young people, as well as to those who are incarcerated. Each lesson was designed to stand on its own, and contains written exercises on a tear-out sheet so that students may hand (or mail) them in for grading. The 10 lessons in the first series cover the following topics: the faces of unbelief; the existence of God (three parts, dealing with cause and effect, design, and morality); creation vs. evolution (two parts); a general introduction to the Bible; the inspiration of the Bible; what God expects of me (the Gospel plan of salvation); and the uniqueness and singularity of Christ’s church.

The intermediate-level course has been designed for the student who already has completed the first course, or for someone who simply wants to pursue a somewhat more in-depth study. The 10 lessons in the series include discussions on: faith and knowledge (two parts); how man is made in the image and likeness of God; Jesus Christ—Lord and Savior; Satan—his origin and mission; the problem of evil, pain, and suffering; the origin of the soul; the destiny of the soul; and creation and evolution (two parts).



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Bert Thompson