



Conducted by
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"Why did God create the universe?"

The word universe is from two Latin words: *unus* meaning "one" and *vertere* meaning "to turn". Just as there is one God so there is but one universe, which really is a system of systems which are "separate, but united; distinct, though amalgamated; heterogeneous, though homogeneous" (Alexander Campbell).

The universe is not a product of chance, but design. It was created by Almighty God - a fact clearly revealed in the Scriptures. **"In the beginning God created the heaven**

and the earth" (Genesis 1:1). "For in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is and rested the seventh day..." (Exodus 20:11). "You alone are the Lord. You made the heavens, even the highest heavens, and all their starry host, the earth and all that is in them. You give life to everything, and the multitudes of heaven worship you" (Nehemiah 9:6, N.I.V.). "He stretches out the north over the empty place and hangs the earth upon nothing" (Job 26:7). "In the beginning you laid the foundations of the earth and the heavens are the work of your hands" (Psalm 102:25, N.I.V.). "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by Him, and without Him was not anything made that was made" (John 1:1-3). "God who made the world and all things therein, seeing He is Lord of heaven and earth, dwells not in temples made with hands..." (Acts 17:24). "Through faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the Word of God, so that things which are seen were not made of things which do appear" (Hebrews 11:3). There are many other passages which could be quoted here, but these suffice for our purpose.

BIG BANG

Many people today reject creationism. Many scientists are included in their ranks. The majority see the existence of the universe as the result of a Big Bang. (what caused the Big Bang? What was there before the Big Bang? These are questions that immediately spring to mind.) This theory is a popular, secular explanation for the origin of the universe. Donald B. DeYoung in his book *Astronomy and the Bible* explains the theory thus: "the process supposedly began with the explosion of a nugget, or 'kernel', of mass energy, about fifteen billion years ago. As the energetic radiation spread outward, temperatures slowly cooled enough for hydrogen and helium atoms to form. About ten billion years ago, the first stars began to form from the cooling gas as in the young universe. This star-forming process eventually gave rise to the Milky Way and other galaxies. When these initial stars had sufficiently aged, some of them became supernovae explosions. The resulting star fragments later recombined into new stars to repeat the formation disintegration process. Our sun is said to be a third-generation star, a relatively recent addition to the family of stars, and to have formed around five billion years ago. Other star fragments are thought to provide the material for planets and life forms, including people". Clearly, this theory is completely contrary to God's revelation. I agree with Dr. Henry Morris (creation scientist) in his declaration that such theories are part of "the long war against God".

LIGHT YEARS

The universe staggers the mind. I believe it speaks of God's eternity, immensity and infinity. The distances in the universe are so great that scientists talk in terms of "light-years" to describe them. Remember a light year is 5.58 times 10^{12} miles or roughly 6 trillion miles (about 10 trillion kilometres). A light-year is also the approximate total distance that all motor vehicles on earth travel during the course of a year. Alpha Centauri (the nearest star to the earth after the sun) is 4.3 light years away, which is a distance 250,000 times greater than that to the sun. Our normal spacecraft would take 100,000 years to reach Alpha Centauri. And that is only a drop in the proverbial ocean! Consider the following statistics: the moon is 1.3 light seconds from the earth; the sun, 8.3 light minutes; Pluto (the most distant planet in our solar system) is 5.3 light hours away; Andromeda Galaxy is 2 million light years from earth; and Quasars are 10 billion

light years distant. In the "light" of all this, we can surely say of God: "How Great Thou Art!".

WHY

A lot of modern scientists have a problem with the question; *why?* I do not think this was the case with the founders of modern science. I agree with Frances Schaeffer when he wrote in his book *How Should We then Live?* It has been said that seventeenth-century scientists limited themselves to the *how* without interest in the *why*. This is not true. Newton, like other early scientists, had no problem with the *why* because he began with the existence of a personal; God who had created the universe. . . . Newton's intense interest in the Bible came out of his view that the same God who had created the universe had given people truth in the Bible. And his view that the Bible contained the same sort of truth as could be learned from a study of the universe. Newton and these other scientists would have been astonished at a science obsessed with how the universe functions, but professionally failing to ask the question 'Why?'.

But back to our question: Why did God create the universe? Alexander Campbell in his book *The Christian System* has written: "One God, one system of nature, one universe. That universe is composed of innumerable systems, which, in perfect concert, move forward in subordination to one supreme end. That one end of all things is the sovereign and infinite pleasure of Him who inhabits eternity and animates the universe with His presence." His words are in accordance with God's Word. In the book of Revelation we read: "And the four living creatures had each of them six wings about him: and they were all full of eyes within: and they rest not day and night, saying, Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, who was, and is, and is to come. And then those living creatures gave glory and honour and thanks to Him who sat on the throne, who lives for ever and ever, four and twenty elders (certain angels) fall down before Him who sat on the throne and worship Him who lives for ever and ever, and cast their crowns before the throne saying, You are worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honour and power: for you have created all things and for your pleasure they are and were created" (4:8-1). So the answer is clear: the universe and everything in it was created for *the pleasure* of God - and that includes you and me! If we are not living to please God then we have missed the whole point of our existence. And I would add this. The universe is also created for man's enjoyment. He is the crown of God's creation. He was made in the image and likeness of God and was given dominion over the earth. "The heaven, even the heavens, are the Lord's: but the earth has He given to the children of men" (Psalm 115:16). Enjoy it all while you can!

CONCLUSION

Finally it is clear from God's word that one day this universe will be destroyed and there will be inaugurated a new heaven and a new earth wherein dwells righteousness (2 Peter 3:10-13). The present universe had a beginning and will have an end. I believe the fall of man has brought about its inevitable destruction. Carl Sagan, scientist and atheist, died recently. He was author of the famous work *Cosmos* for which incidentally, Vangelis wrote a brilliant soundtrack. Sagan declared: "The cosmos is all that is or ever will be." He could not have been more wrong. For him it is now too late to acknowledge the Creator of the universe. Truly, to know the Lord is to know what it is all about.

(All questions, meantime, to Ian Davidson, 21 Glenlyon,
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