

Our Puny Concept of God

Isaiah 40:13-15, 18

Intro

In the last 25 years or so there have been great discoveries that are pointing skeptics to the God of the Bible. Lately scientists are discussing the “*Fine Tuning Event*” versus the “*Chaotic Event*.” Many astronomers believe now that the Universe was finely tuned and that it did not happen by accident. It has been proven that Time and Space had a beginning, what some call “*a point of creation*.”

What astronomers and cosmologists are finding today is truly astounding. Its headline stuff, if only the media knew how to translate it and put it into simple language. Most people believe the universe began by a cosmic accident. But now many scientists are saying that the universe was created by a highly ordered event rather than a cosmic accident. Science does not have an answer as to how the universe originated but continues in its research and quest.

What Astronomers are finding

Here are what some astronomers and cosmologists are saying:

- Dr. Eric Carlson (Astronomer):
"The universe was started by a highly ordered event rather than a chaotic event."
- Dr. Mark Davis (Astronomer, Berkeley University):
"Fine tuning is a remarkable statement and that the universe is on a knife edge."
- Dr. George Smoot (Astronomer, from NASA):
"Cosmologists are very tempted to think someone had a design or plan for the universe."
- Paul Davies (author of *God & the New Physics*) has moved from promoting atheism to conceding that “*the laws [of physics]... seem themselves to be the product of exceedingly ingenious design.*” He further testifies: “*There is for me powerful evidence that there is something going on behind it all...It seems as though somebody has fine-tuned nature's numbers to make the universe...The impression of design is overwhelming.*”
- Tony Rothman (theoretical physicist) concluded his recent essay with these words: “*The medieval theologian who gazed at the night sky through the eyes of Aristotle and saw angels moving the spheres in harmony has become the modern cosmologist who gazes at the same sky through the eyes of Einstein and sees the hand of God not in angels but in the constants of nature...When confronted with the order and beauty of the universe and the strange coincidences of nature, it's very tempting to take a leap of faith from science into religion. I am sure many physicists want to. I only wish they would admit it.*”

Fine Tuning of the Universe

Lately astronomers, especially astrophysicists, have discovered primeval galaxies and they give a clue to the beginning of the universe, thanks to the COBE space explorer. In those primeval galaxies there are cosmic micro waves in the background. This micro wave radiation is the closest astrophysicists have gone to the beginning of the universe. In micro radiation there are wrinkles.

The fine precision balance of the wrinkles in the radiation is crucial for life as we know it today. The balance of precision of these wrinkles has to be 10 to the power of 60, that's 10 followed by 60 zeros.

The actual calculation is *novemdecillion*! For instance a billion is 10 to the power of 9, a trillion is 10 to the power of 12 and so on. The number 10 to the power of 60 is a huge, huge number. The fine tuning of energy expansion and gravitational traction has to be absolutely finely balanced. If the expansion rate was faster, galaxies would form too fast for life to exist and if it was slower the universe would collapse. But someone or something fine tuned the precision of the radiation wrinkles for the universe and biological life to exist.

The universe is a fine tuned environment; there is a foundational constancy in nature. The primal mystery is who or what fine tuned the universe? This is the glaring mystery which astronomers and cosmologists don't have an answer for.

Since the origin of the universe is unknown to science, Isaiah tells us that no one can fathom the understanding of the Creator. *“Lift your eyes and look to the heavens: Who created all these?...Do you not know? Have you not heard? The Lord is the everlasting God, the Creator...”* (Isaiah 40:26, 28).

Dr. Robert Jastrow of NASA said, *“There is no doubt that a parallel exists between the big bang as an event and the Christian notion of creation from nothing.”*

Sir Fred Hoyle (British astrophysicist) says, *“A common sense interpretation of the facts suggests that a super intellect has monkeyed with physics, as well as with chemistry and biology, and that there are no blind forces worth speaking about in nature. The numbers one calculates from the facts seem to me so overwhelming as to put this conclusion almost beyond question.”*

Creation Testifies of God

Romans 1:20, *“For since the creation of the world God’s invisible qualities—his eternal power and divine nature—have been clearly seen, being understood from what has been made, so that people are without excuse.”*

Reductionist Problem

Reductionism is the theory that every complex phenomenon, especially in science can be explained by analyzing the simplest, most basic physical mechanisms that are in operation.

Einstein remarked that the modern age has perfected the means but confused the ends. Physicists have reduced matter to subatomic particles and software engineers have reduced most of what we know about the world to bits of information.

Some reductionists readily admit the degeneration or decline of the pleasure sense. Here are a few examples of some well known reductionists.

Charles Darwin in his own words describes the process:

“Up to the age of thirty or beyond it, poetry of many kinds gave me great pleasure; and even as a schoolboy I took intense delight in Shakespeare... Formerly pictures gave me considerable, and music very great delight. But now for many years I cannot endure to read a line of poetry. I have tried lately to read Shakespeare, and found it so intolerably dull that it nauseated me. I have also almost lost my taste for pictures or music . . . I retain some taste for fine scenery, but it does not cause me exquisite delight which it formerly did... My mind seems to have become a kind of machine for grinding general laws out of large collections of facts... The loss of these tastes is a loss of happiness, and may

possibly be injurious to the intellect, and more probably to the moral character, by enfeebling the emotional part of our nature." (Source: *The Autobiography of Charles Darwin*, Charles Darwin).

Lenin too felt the same. He could not tolerate a flower in his room. He wrote, *"I cannot listen to music too often,"* he confessed after attending a performance of Beethoven's "Apassionata" sonata. *"It makes me want to say kind, stupid things, and pat the heads of people. But now you have to beat them on the head, beat them without mercy."* (Source: Lenin quoted in New York Times Book Review, Oct. 27, 1996).

The problem with those who reduce the world to just matter, they risk withering the sense of wonder. Science tries to explain things away and in the end people lose the sense of awe and wonder.

Fascination and Awe

But Albert Einstein was not a reductionist. He once said, *"The most beautiful thing we can experience is the mysterious. It is the source of all true art and science. He to whom this emotion is a stranger, who can no longer pause to wonder and stand rapt in awe, is as good as dead: his eyes are closed."*

He also said, *"The scientist is possessed by the sense of the universe causation...his religious feeling takes the form of a rapturous amazement at the harmony of natural law, which reveals an intelligence of such superiority that, compared with it, all the systematic thinking and acting of human beings is an utterly insignificant reflection."*

One of the tragedies of our modern world is the loss of awe and wonder. We have grown so accustomed to breakthroughs, discoveries and technology that we have become unimpressed. Startling new advances barely captures our attention. And why should they when they are announced every day? Mystery and awe has become something of an endangered species in our world. And the tragic result is that we have become inoculated against awe and resistant to a sense of wonder.

Think about it. When was the last time you took time to pause in wonder, and stand in rapt awe as you stared into the night sky? I am not talking about just a fleeting glance. I am talking about a long lingering look into the heavens.

For as much as we know and as advanced as we have become, there is still one place where mystery is the rule and not the exception, and that is the sky. But the problem is we hardly ever look up anymore. We scurry around from task to task so preoccupied with the little things in front of us that we never stop to take in the majestic things above us.

But over the years as we have probed deeper in to the cosmos more discoveries have been made and new information has come to the surface that have caused many to rethink their positions.

Conclusion

If the church has a low view of God, its light will be dim, and the darkness will not be pushed back. Today, our concept of God is often sentimental rather than biblically based. Many people embrace what has been called "moralistic therapeutic deism," a view of God that says He exists to make us feel good about ourselves, and that He involves Himself in our lives only to affirm us and solve our

problems. As long as we do not properly grasp the transcendent majesty and awesomeness of God, our light will not pierce the darkness.

AW. Tozer's book *The Knowledge of the Holy* puts it well when he said, "What comes into our minds when we think about God is the most important thing about us." But our view of God, Tozer argues, is often "distorted" or "diminished" because we have embraced the prevailing mindset of our culture and imposed that mindset upon Scripture. So we find ourselves unable even to begin to comprehend concepts like God's holiness, His power, and majesty. Tozer's desire was to expand our vision and thus our capacity to worship God rightly. If we fail to do this, then our understanding of God becomes distorted, and we move away from Him.

Paradoxically, Tozer acknowledges the "incomprehensibility" of God, even as He is helping us to better understand His attributes. When we draw closer to God, you see, we begin to understand just how much greater He is than anything we can grasp. Our instinct is to make God into something "manageable" and "controllable." That was the sin of the Garden of Eden—to be like God. But if you could do that, you wouldn't need Him.

So instead of trying to manage or control God, we must surrender ourselves and place our trust in Him even though we can't fully understand Him. And when we do this, we are not groping in the dark, for as Tozer says, "God in condescending love has by revelation declared certain things to be true of Himself. These we call His attributes." He has provided enough knowledge of these, Tozer says, "to satisfy our intellects and ravish our hearts."

I believe it's an important step toward unlearning some of the most common errors about God, and learning how to begin to comprehend the incomprehensible.

In the end I want to quote from Ravi Zacharias' book entitled *Recapture the Wonder*. He says that when you lose the sense of wonder you lose the sense of gratitude. How true.

Thank God and worship Him!