

The “Big Bang” As An Act Of God

Can Christians Accept the Big Bang Theory As A Christian Notion?



What the “Big Bang” is All About

Many Christians have a problem with the idea that scientists have come to know as the “Big Bang” theory. This theory postulates that there is a single event from which all time, space and matter springs; a ‘cosmic singularity’ or an instantaneous appearance of time, space and matter from which everything in our universe evolves. For the most part, it seems that Christians have come to see this theory as a scientific explanation of our origin, as if the ‘big bang’ theory offers a comprehensive alternative to the creation story offered in the Book of Genesis. They may also see the ‘big bang’ as the first incremental step in a process of evolution; a natural sequence of events that requires no God or supernatural intervention.



Father Georges-Henri Lemaître (one of the originators of the Big Bang Theory) was a Belgian Roman Catholic priest who studied humanities at a Jesuit school

But there is another way to see and evaluate the ‘big bang’ event that so much science substantiates. Now we have taken some time to discuss the evidence we have that points to a ‘big bang’ event in THIS article, so we won’t cover that again in this discussion, but I do think it is important to understand what the theory implies. Think about it for a minute. All science leans toward this theory, and the theory itself implies that there is a beginning to all space time and matter in our universe; a point of beginning. Is that really all that different from what the Bible teaches? If God did actually create our universe, isn’t it possible that we might look back at this creation event and see all the same evidence that we still see and attribute to the ‘big bang’? And just because we see evidence of an initial creation event, does this necessitate the ‘fact’ that evolution is the only natural consequence? Isn’t it possible that the cosmic singularity we see in the ‘big bang’ theory is, in fact, that moment of creation that is described in the Bible?

Well, if the ‘big bang’ is simply the cosmic event in which God created the universe, then we would expect the Bible to speak in language which is consistent with the theory. And, wouldn’t you know it, that is exactly what we see in the Biblical record. Before we take a look at the scriptures, let’s break down the ‘big bang’ theory into its most fundamental elements. The theory proposes three essential truths:

1. The universe begins at a fixed time in the distant past
2. The 'cosmic singularity' is a rapid expansion event and the universe continues to expand
3. The universe is now cooling and 'running down' as time passes

While we see plenty of physical and natural evidence that these three propositions are true, we, as Christians, are encouraged to know that the Bible also describes these truths and accurately predicts what scientists didn't discover until very recently. Let's take a look at the scriptures that support, explain and predict all three foundational principles of the 'big bang' theory.



The Universe Begins at a Fixed Time in the Distant Past

This first foundational principle of the 'big bang' theory proposes that all space, time and matter begin in a singular event; a hot, energy intense yet highly organized 'explosion' (for lack of a better word) from which emerges all the matter and energy that eventually is shaped into the galaxies, stars and planets in our universe. The Bible also speaks of just such a beginning, and it attributes this beginning to a supernatural 'beginner' who exists OUTSIDE space time and matter. Take a look at the following verses:



Colossians 1:15-17

He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation. For by him all things were created: things in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or powers or rulers or authorities; all things were created by him and for him. He is before all things, and in him all things hold together.



John 17:24

"Father, I want those you have given me to be with me where I am, and to see my glory, the glory you have given me because you loved me before the creation of the world.



Ephesians 1:4

For he chose us in him before the creation of the world to be holy and blameless in his sight.



1 Peter 1:20

He was chosen before the creation of the world, but was revealed in these last times for your sake.



2 Timothy 1:9

who has saved us and called us to a holy life—not because of anything we have done but because of his own purpose and grace. This grace was given us in Christ Jesus before the beginning of time,



Titus 1:2

a faith and knowledge resting on the hope of eternal life, which God, who does not lie, promised before the beginning of time,



Proverbs 8:22-31

"The LORD brought me forth as the first of his works, before his deeds of old; I was appointed from eternity, from the beginning, before the world began. When there were no oceans, I was given birth, when there were no springs abounding with water; before the mountains were settled in place, before the hills, I was given birth, before he made the earth or its fields or any of the dust of the world. I was there when he set the heavens in place, when he marked out the horizon on the face of the deep, when he established the clouds above and fixed securely the fountains of the deep, when he gave the sea its boundary so the waters would not overstep his command, and when he marked out the foundations of the earth.

From just these few verses, we can conclude that the scriptures proclaim that the universe began in a single creation event. In addition, the Bible describes God as a being who exists OUTSIDE of time, space and matter (often described as being 'before' these things). Using the words with which we, as limited human beings, understand and communicate what we know to be true, God seeks to tell us something about the created universe and his nature as a creator who exists 'outside' the created order. Nothing in the Biblical record contradicts the facts of the 'big bang' theory. In fact, the Bible supports this first foundational principle of the theory.



The Universe Begins as an Expansion and Continues to Expand

In addition to this first principle, the 'big bang' theory proposes the idea that the cosmic singularity was, in fact, a tremendous expansion event (that's why we sometimes call it an 'explosion') that begins a process of expansion that continues to this very day. The 'big bang' is a single expansion event that occurs in the past and initiates a continuing expansion activity that we see in our universe today. There is, therefore a 'past yet continuing' dimension to this expansion that we also happen to see in the scriptures. The Bible describes the fact that God began the universe with an expansion event in the ancient past. Check out these verses:



Isaiah 42:5

This is what God the LORD says - he who created the heavens and stretched them out...



Isaiah 44:24

"This is what the LORD says - your Redeemer, who formed you in the womb: I am the LORD, who has made all things, who alone stretched out the heavens, who spread out the earth by myself,



Isaiah 45:12

It is I who made the earth and created mankind upon it. My own hands stretched out the heavens; I marshaled their starry hosts.

In all of these verse (and many more that I have omitted for brevity) God is described as stretching the universe and doing this in the past tense. All these scriptural words describe a past activity. At the same time, however, the scriptures describe a continuing stretching that God is involved with. There are many scriptures which describe the stretching of the universe in the present tense:

**Job 9:8**

He alone stretches out the heavens and treads on the waves of the sea.

**Psalm 104:2**

He wraps himself in light as with a garment; he stretches out the heavens like a tent

**Isaiah 40:22**

He sits enthroned above the circle of the earth, and its people are like grasshoppers. He stretches out the heavens like a canopy, and spreads them out like a tent to live in.

It's interesting that the Bible describes both the past singularity event (which is actually an expansion event) and the continuing expansion of the universe that has been observed and confirmed by scientist. And remember that the Bible made these assertions, thousands of years BEFORE humans we ever able to observe the expansion of the universe!

**The Universe Continues to Run Down from a Very Intense Start**

Finally, the 'big bang' theory makes the assertion that following the initial cosmic singularity (an event of tremendous heat and energy) the expansion of the universe has exhibited a continuing cooling and an increase in what scientists have come to describe as 'entropy'. Entropy is sometimes described in the following manner: "Energy spontaneously tends to flow only from being concentrated in one place to becoming diffused or dispersed and spread out. (in other words, disorder or randomness tends to increase)". Scientists have observed that systems will, if isolated from external sources of order or energy or 'information,' eventually run down and 'die.' They observe this activity in our universe as well. The universe appears to be expanding and cooling. The scripture agrees with this observation, as well. First, the scripture has always maintained that God is the creator of both moral and natural law:

**Jeremiah 33:25**

This is what the LORD says: 'If I have not established my covenant with day and night and the fixed laws of heaven and earth

Of course, one of these laws in the Second Law of Thermodynamics, also known as the law of "Entropy". But in addition to this, the Bible also describes the fact that all creation is 'winding down'; all creation, including the universe (of course), is slowing, and cooling and 'groaning' in 'decay':

**Romans 8:20-22**

For the creation was subjected to frustration, not by its own choice, but by the will of the one who subjected it, in hope that the creation itself will be liberated from its bondage to decay and brought into the glorious freedom of the children of God. We know that the whole creation has been groaning as in the pains of childbirth right up to the present time.



Psalm 102:22-26

In the beginning you laid the foundations of the earth, and the heavens are the work of your hands. They will perish, but you remain; they will all wear out like a garment. Like clothing you will change them and they will be discarded

This final principle of the 'big bang' theory is also described by the Bible. God told us about it long before we could see it evidentially. All three foundational principles of the 'big bang' theory are affirmed in the scriptures.



The Theory Supports God's Special Revelation

It is interesting to note that as a Christian, I can accept what I see in the universe and what has been proposed in the 'big bang' theory without having to abandon my faith. In fact, I actually see the science here as a confirmation of my faith. The Bible predicts what scientists have discovered. It makes sense that the single creation event of a creator God would leave us with evidence of it's occurrence. What would we expect to see in the scientific historical record of the ancient past, following God's creation of the universe? Wouldn't we expect to see evidence for a cosmic singularity? Of course we would. So, as a Christian, I am not afraid to see the evidence. It merely confirms my faith. I understand the fact that a universe that BEGAN must have a BEGINNER. For more on what this implies, read THIS article. Certainly, Einstein understood the implication here. His theory of relativity required a 'beginning' to all time space and matter. As he developed his theory, he realized that it was a first evidence that the universe had a point of beginning. And he understood what this implied! Einstein knew that his discovery pointed to a creative agent who by definition would have to exist OUTSIDE of space time and matter in order to initiate these elements in the created order. Other scientists were equally uncomfortable with the notion of a cosmic singularity. Sir Arthur Eddington, a famous 20th century cosmologist, actually disliked the 'big bang' theory for this reason:

*"(the 'big bang' theory) seems to require a sudden and peculiar beginning of things."
"Philosophically, the notion of a beginning is repugnant to me."*

I can understand why thoughtful scientists might feel this way. Beginnings require beginners. But as a Christian, I am very comfortable with the 'big bang' theory. It clearly points to a creation event that requires nothing less than a being that fits the attributes that we Christians commonly ascribe to God