

A PRACTICAL MAN'S PROOF OF GOD

In the second decade of the twenty-first century, there has been a growing aggressive campaign by atheists to destroy religion. Much of what atheists like Richard Dawkins, Sam Harris, Michael Shermer, and the like say is absolutely true. The problem with their attacks has been that the attacks are leveled against man-made religions of various kinds, and there is no question but that religious wars, intolerance, and persecution have plagued mankind throughout the centuries. Atheism does not have a better track record and books by people like Alister McGrath, Paul Chamberlain, and others have effectively responded to much of the twenty-first century attacks on faith leveled by the atheist community.

For most of us, this philosophical/theological debate may be of passing interest, but on a practical level the question of whether one person can make a better sounding philosophical position than another does not have much of an effect on what we believe. This booklet is written with an eye to looking at evidence. We are not defending any particular religion or faith in this discussion. We are only interested in scientific support for the idea that "there is something out there" which we might call "God" and that there is scientific evidence which supports this belief.

WAS THERE A BEGINNING TO THE UNIVERSE?

It is important as we start to be careful about the meaning of words. We titled this booklet *A Practical Man's Proof* because we believe that most rational people hold common day understandings of words. Some atheist writers evade issues by taking unusual understandings of common words which change the understanding of what the concept is that is being discussed. A classic example of this is the word "vacuum." In the laboratory a vacuum is a region of space in which everything has been removed. The common idea is one of complete emptiness. On a cosmological level a vacuum would be even more severe, because anything that could send something through a cosmological vacuum would also not exist. In quantum mechanics the term "vacuum fluctuations" has been used in various models, but these applications are in theories about particles that build the physical universe in which we exist and of which we are made.

Stephen Hawking has boldly proposed that his model based on these concepts eliminates any consideration of their being a God (see *The Grand Design*) and atheists have tried to capitalize on this idea, but quantum mechanics simply has a different set of rules and its own vocabulary to describe theories of how particles like quarks, leptons, bosons, etc., may function.

In addition to these kinds of proposals we have a number of writers proposing multiple universes in other dimensions in which a parallel is made with what we see in the universe in which we live. These are fanciful and interesting proposals, but they are not testable or falsifiable in any way and thus have no evidence of a direct or indirect nature to support them. On any kind of a practical level, they are more fantasy than serious scientific proposes. A number of books by scientists have been written dealing with this point (see *The Trouble With Physics* by Lee Smolin and *Hiding in the Mirror* by Lawrence Krauss). New discoveries will obviously alter this discussion, but we can only function on the basis of physical evidence, not proposals that are untestable or guesses about what we do not know.

So we come back to our original question of whether the cosmos in which we live had a beginning.

Evidence 1: The hydrogen issue. Hydrogen is believed to be the starting point for all of the matter that exists in the cosmos. Hydrogen is fused to make helium and other products, ultimately giving us a picture of how every element in the periodic chart may have been formed. The big issue here is that hydrogen is a non-renewable resource. There is no process operational in the cosmos today that produces hydrogen. We have models and experiments that show that under incredibly extreme conditions, hydrogen could be produced from energy, but that is not happening today.

Throughout the cosmos we see hydrogen being consumed (fused into heavier elements), so the total amount of hydrogen in the cosmos continuously decreases. The cosmos cannot be eternal in nature, because the hydrogen would have all been fused and we would not see the massive clouds of hydrogen we see through the cosmos.

Evidence 2: Every grade school child knows that the cosmos is expanding. Numerous experiments show that galaxies are not only moving out away from each other, but modern measurements also show that the rate of movement is increasing. The cosmos is accelerating in its expansion. The expansion of the cosmos is from an apparent single

point, and a variety of forms of evidence support the idea that the cosmos began with an incredibly hot, incredibly small point in space/time called a singularity. The fact that it is accelerating suggests to us it will not collapse or oscillate in any way. Most students of the evidence will suggest that space, time, and energy had their beginning at this singularity referred to in the past as "the big bang." What banged or who did the banging is not a question science can answer at this point, and we do not invent a God to explain it, but it is another evidence that there was a beginning.

Evidence 3: The second law of thermodynamics. One of the most fundamental laws of science is the law that states that in any closed system things tend to move toward a condition of disorder. This law explains everything from diffusion to refrigerators. In space we see many examples of the second law. The term "heat death" is used to refer to a star or galaxy in which the disorder of the system has reached such a level that normal heat processes cannot operate. Stephen Hawking in his book *A Brief History of Time* devoted a whole chapter to the implications of the second law and its support of the fact that there was a beginning, and then attempted to undo that conclusion by proposing something he called "imaginary time" which he really could not even define very well.

Carl Sagan used to define the cosmos as "All that is or ever was or ever will be" (*Cosmos*, 1980, 257). That is a pretty good definition of a closed system in which no organizing energy is added from the outside. An eternal universe which had no beginning would be a universe in heat death—void of available energy to carry on any planetary system.

THE QUESTION OF CAUSE

If we agree that there was a beginning to the cosmos and that space, time, energy/matter all had a start we are led to another question. That would be what the cause of that beginning had to be. One of the earliest atheist documents was the *Humanist Manifesto* which simply claimed that the "[creation] as self existing and not created." In recent years these items are said to have come from nothing by redefining what "nothing" is. These suggestions are faith approaches and are not based on evidence. They really do not answer the question. One also has to be conscious of the conservation laws of science which state that in any process all physical quantities (charge, mass, spin, baryon number,

etc.) must be conserved. You cannot destroy or create the things about which we are talking without paying attention to the conservation laws and if you agree there was a beginning and try to maintain it was uncaused you have a contradiction with an established scientific law.

What can be done with the question of cause is to identify some of the properties the cause of the beginning would have to possess. If we believe that space and time came into existence at the beginning of the cosmos, then whatever the cause of the beginning was, it had to be outside of space and time. If one believes in God as the cause of the beginning, then that God would have to possess the capacity to function outside of space and time. If one looks for a scientific explanation, that explanation must come from entities that are outside the space/time continuum. Proposals such as super strings, branes, and the like suggest entities that lie outside of our four dimensions of X , Y , Z , and time. As many as eleven spacial dimensions are proposed in some of these models. The difficulty here is that once again the proposals of super strings and branes are not testable scientifically and not falsifiable. In recent years books like *The Cosmic Landscape* (Leonard Susskind) have suggested that these proposals are bad science because of this, but they are creative ways to try to get at the cause issue.

A second property that can be used to consider whether the cause is a God outside of space/time or something like super strings or branes is to look for an indication of whether there is intelligence behind the cause or not. This can be approached statistically with mathematical examination of chance processes proposed as an explanation of the beginning. The second booklet in this series is titled *What Was the Cause of the Beginning?* and explores this issue. The third booklet, *A Help in Understanding What God Is*, is a look at the biblical description of what God's nature is in terms of his dimensional makeup, and is linked to another booklet titled *Who Created God?* We hope that practical readers will find these ideas interesting and a stimulus to learning more.

All of these and many more questions are answered in the same way—by looking at the evidence in a practical, common sense way. If you are interested in pursuing these things in more detail, we invite you to contact us. We have available books, audio CDs, DVDs, correspondence courses, and booklets/

pamphlets and all can be obtained on loan without cost. You can get more information on what is available by requesting our catalog, or additional copies of this pamphlet can be ordered from:

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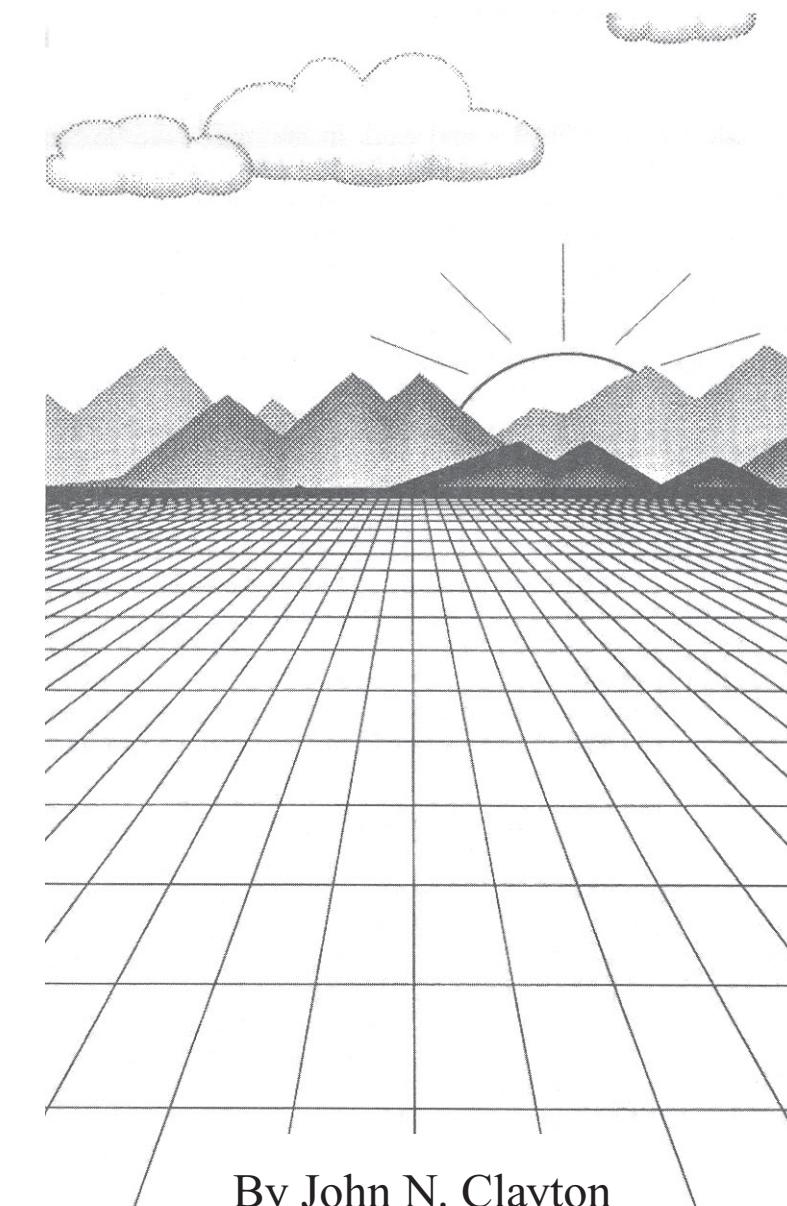
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