

APOLOGETICS



Keep The Faith

Episode 3 – Kalamity

Welcome back to another instalment of the companion for this new and exciting series of the podcast!

Last week we reviewed different types of knowledge, and how apologetics helps us to keep and share the faith.

This week, we're going to begin looking at our first argument! Additionally, to put my money where my mouth is, I'm going to utilise the argument we're talking about by engaging with an article online to show you how to spot faulty thinking.

In the podcast, I began with an interaction I had with a lad in the Friday night group before we went into lockdown:

I decided to start engaging in structured conversation with those guys and I once asked the group "is it possible God exists?"

I was expecting some sort of reasoned discussion with interesting opinions being shared.

The instant reaction from one lad and one girl was "no".

Not even a reason, just a flat, plain, no.

"That was a vociferous no" I thought to myself, "I wonder why they're so firm on that?"

So I asked "oh right, why's that?"

To which the response was "science".

Just... science.

Here's my challenge to you – what would you say in that instance? Would you have the confidence to speak up and challenge someone when they're that dead certain we can show science has disproven God?

If you answer no to that then you're 100% in the right place at the right time, because the Kalam will be a perfect jumping-off point for you!

Anyway, have a guess what question I asked next.

I asked "oh, what scientific theory are you referring to?"

Here's why that's important – I was doing a couple of things.

Firstly, I wanted to frame the conversation. He wanted to make this a chat about science, so I let him, because that's where he felt it was relevant. Secondly, I wanted to make sure he was doing the heavy-lifting with a defence because he had something called the burden of proof. The burden of proof is generally that whoever makes the claim has the responsibility of showing its truth. Basically, it means if you claim something is true, then you need to back it up.

This is something I see Christians struggle with all the time! They let people who have made claims like 'science has disproven God' off the hook and then spend their time defending their own belief. Don't do this! If someone makes a claim like that they have to defend it, it's not your job to defend why your opposing belief is true.

Once that was out there, he decided the big bang theory was the best proof of God's non-existence!

That was great news. If you're not sure why, allow me to explain...

The big bang theory, the one developed and contributed to by such noted scientists as Borde, Guth, Vilenkin, Hubble, Hawking and Penrose, is actually a great tool to argue that God *does* exist!

How cool is that?

I've actually had chats with Christians in their mid-30s and 40s who say they hate the big bang theory because it threatens God's existence.

Here is where I'm going to put my money where my mouth is. Let's engage with [this article on the big bang theory](#) written on 'answers in genesis'.

Before we set off, I am not disparaging or discrediting answersingenesis, I actually use the site quite a lot for information and alternative theories as they do a great job of putting them across.

What I *am* doing, however, is showing you an example of the kind of thought process that has led to some Christians rejecting the theory, thus cutting off their nose to spite their face, and showing why we might not want to do that.

So let's get into it!

First off, straight out of the gate, we have an issue. The author writes "*The "big bang" is a story about how the universe came into existence*".

I'm so sorry to be pedantic, but no, it isn't. The theory is simply an explanation of the conditions of the primordial universe in its earliest moments. I think the author here has read it with their own bias informing their reading of it. The reason I think that is because they tip their hand later, saying "*ultimately, the big bang is a secular story of origins. When first proposed, it was an attempt to explain how the universe could have been created without God. Really, it is an alternative to the Bible*".

There are just... so many issues here. I'll just bullet point them.

1. '*A secular story of origins*' – how so? If God did create in this manner, then it would simply be secular language for a Biblical story. That's not a bad thing.
2. '*It was an attempt to explain how the universe could have been created without God*' – so what? Honestly, why does that matter? Often, the intended purpose for something is minor in relation to what it actually achieves. For example, we have a great defence to Euthyphro's Dilemma *because* of Plato's attempt to undermine the idea of God.

Consider this – if an evil scientist attempted to infect the water supply of a city in

order to kill the population, but ended up providing them with a vaccine to cancer, the end point would be a vaccine to cancer, which is great. Sure, lock the bloke up, but his reason for doing it is irrelevant in the grand scheme to the outcome.

What a horrible analogy, let's move on...

3. *'Really, it is an alternative to the Bible'* – okay, if this is true then we should reject it. Sure. But is that true? I would argue not.

We have more issues as the article progresses, and I'll try not to get bound up in each one otherwise this will take forever to write and to read!

Further on we read *"The Bible teaches that God created the universe in six days (Genesis 1; Exodus 20:11). It is clear from the context in Genesis that these were days in the ordinary sense (i.e., 24-hour days) since they are bounded by evening and morning and occur in an ordered list (second day, third day, etc.). Conversely, the big bang teaches the universe has evolved over billions of years"*.

Firstly, most Biblical scholars agree that Genesis (1-11) and the creation narrative are classed as 'mytho-history'. Stories told with a unique (for the time) view of explaining historical truths that otherwise could not be explained. This means, we don't *have* to take it as absolutely literal.

With that out of the way, it makes the idea of 'literal days' and the order of the creation much less of an issue.

Let's encounter another point of contention, since we're here...

The article says *"Many people don't realize that the big bang is a story not only about the past but also about the future. The most popular version of the big bang teaches that the universe will expand forever and eventually run out of usable energy. According to the story, it will remain that way forever in a state that astronomers call "heat death." But the Bible teaches that the world will be judged and remade. Paradise will be restored. The big bang denies this crucial biblical teaching."*

Yes, the exceptionally sound science of entropy, which helps us to utilise another defence of God – the fact the universe is not past eternal. Thanks to entropy (the universe running out of energy) we can claim the universe was not past eternal, because it would have run out of energy by now, and therefore had a beginning, and therefore had a cause (the Kalam argument). We'll look into that properly in later episodes but I feel like the author doesn't have a sound understanding of apologetics and the philosophical arguments for God's existence here. He's shooting himself in the foot.

Additionally, the big bang states the universe will end in 'heat death' because it doesn't have a parameter for the outside influence of God! Nor should it, it's a scientific theory. Scientific theories generally say 'all things being equal, [x] will happen'... but things aren't 'all being equal'! God will step in at some point in history. The two points being made here aren't antithetical.

Let's continue on...

At this point in the article, if you're following along, they verge off into monopolies. This isn't a common issue and is very off-in-the-weeds, so for the sake of time I'll skip right over it to the next bit.

The article then says *"The expansion rate of the universe appears to be very finely balanced with the force of gravity... If the universe were the accidental by-product of a big bang, it is difficult to imagine how such a fantastic coincidence could occur. Big-bang cosmology cannot explain why the matter density in the universe isn't greater, causing it to collapse upon itself (closed universe), or less, causing the universe to rapidly fly apart (open*

universe)”.

It's enough to make you want to cry, isn't it?

The big bang theory isn't an entity, it didn't exist and then accidentally create a universe.

God created the universe, utilising the big bang. The extraordinary order we observe in the universe is there *because God is ordered and rational, thus His creation is too*.

This is even an excellent argument for His existence (which we will get to)! The argument from design/fine-tuning. Again, the author doesn't seem to realise this and is cutting off his nose to spite his face.

We'll have several episodes on this later in the series.

The article then goes on about antimatter, which is too out of the scope of these companions to deal with now, but again they shoot themselves by saying *“God created the universe to be essentially matter only”*.

Yep... matter, energy, time and space all came into being at the same time *ex nihilo*. Where have we heard that before? Hmm...

At the end of the article, we have an interesting summary, saying *“The big bang erroneously assumes that the universe was not supernaturally created, but that it came about by natural processes billions of years ago”*.

No? The theory has no mention of anything supernatural *because science can't account for or include it*. If it included the supernatural then it wouldn't be science. The theory, to say it again, has absolutely no mention of what occurred prior to the singularity or what caused it, it just shows what happened from the instance of creation onwards. That's it.

Finally, we have the statement *“ultimately, the best reason to reject the big bang is that it goes against what the Creator of the universe himself has taught: “In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth”*.

Except that it doesn't. It just... doesn't.

When we pair proper Biblical exegesis that comes from Biblical scholars and a mass consensus, with the correct interpretation of the scientific literature in a philosophical framework, we have an answer to the big bang. It's called the Kalam Cosmological Argument.

God bless whoever wrote that. I'm sure they wrote it in good conscience with a convicted heart, and if you want to believe what they are writing then by all means you can do! They are not, and you would not be, any less of a Christian for believing as that article does. It's a bit of a short-sighted view, though. You have to ignore *lots* of evidence for God's existence to hold this idea.

Now, take heart – if you have thought this way up until now allow me to set your mind at ease – the big bang theory is actually great news for us!

You might be wondering why that's the case, so let me ask you something – do things just... pop into being for no reason?

No, anything that begins to exist has a reason for its existence.

I think, as do the vast majority of people and scientists in the world, that that's fair.

Now recap what was said above – what does the big bang actually tell us about?

It describes what happened when the universe was formed from the singularity and the ensuing conditions of the primordial universe – it *does not* give a how or a why for the universe's existence!

Simply put, the big bang theory tells us that the universe began at a point in time, in the finite past, and with it began time, space, matter and energy. *Nothing* existed prior to the

singularity.

Therefore, given our little excursions into how things don't just pop into being without a reason, we need to find a reason for the universe's existence.

In other words everything that begins to exist has a cause.

This is as good as time as any to introduce the premises and conclusion of the Kalam Cosmological Argument!

P1. Everything that begins to exist has a cause

P2. The universe began to exist

C. Therefore, the universe has a cause

It's so short, so intuitive and so simple to use that this is the perfect introductory argument to apologetics.

Over the next few weeks we're going to look at each premise and how it works and how we can defend it. Hopefully that sounds exciting!

Here's our scripture of the week then!

Matthew 22:37 – *"You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind".*

So, why is that the scripture of the week?

Well, as we continue to explore these topics, and as you begin to talk to others about what you're learning, I have no doubt you'll begin to hear things like 'great, but how is that helping you love God more?' or 'don't be so focused on being so intellectual'. If you don't, that's great, but in my personal experience I have had it *a lot* from well-meaning people.

In the church (at large, not Chawn specifically) we often put a high premium on experiencing and feeling God, which is good, don't hear what I'm not saying, but as a result we tend to neglect actually learning more about God.

We're called to love God with all our heart, yes, but we're also called to love God with all our **mind**.

If you take the time to learn the stuff we go through, really understand it, practice it and then use it, you'll be following what Jesus claimed was the greatest commandment.

Love the lord your God with all your heart by spending time with Him, His people, in prayer and by living your life in accordance with His will.

Love the lord your God with all your mind by learning about Him, challenging your understanding and ideas of Him, and then sharing that with others.

Love the lord your God with all your soul by learning to listen to the Holy Spirit, engaging with prayer and the Bible and having it written on your heart who God is and how He loves you.

Finally, here's our question of the week – how might the big bang help us to show that God exists? Have a think about it and let me know!

That's that, then! Next week, we'll be looking at premise 1 in more depth, get hype.

As always, don't be afraid to get into the youth whatsapp chat and let us know how you are, what you're up to and what you're thinking. Get your prayer requests ready for Thursday and get involved in our Bible study! And you can grab us on Instagram @chawnyouth.

Speak to you next week!