

# THE ORIGIN

There are few questions more important than the question of how the universe and all living things came to be. Knowing where we came from is essential for knowing whether life has meaning and purpose. If we exist just by chance, then life has no real meaning except in our imagination. But if we were intentionally created, then life must have an intended purpose, and we should make it our priority to discover what that purpose is. Nearly everyone would agree that the universe is incredibly fine-tuned and that living things are amazingly intricate. The disagreement is over how they became this way. Did the universe come into existence by a random Big Bang explosion, and life evolve by chance? Or did an intelligent Creator deliberately create the universe and all living things, as spoken of in the Bible? Which view is more reasonable? And which view is more compatible with what we can observe?

## CAUSE AND EFFECT

There are four main components of the origin of the universe. Time, energy, space, and matter. Interestingly, each of these is alluded to in the Bible's opening statement:

“In the beginning [*time*] God created [*energy*] the heavens [*space*] and the earth [*matter*].” – Genesis 1:1

Less than a hundred years ago this statement was dismissed as ‘unscientific’. Why? Because most scientists assumed the universe had *no* beginning and therefore didn't need Creator to begin it. But after astronomers observed evidence of galaxies moving away from each other (suggesting that the universe is expanding) they conceded that it *did* have a beginning. For if you ‘rewind’ an expanding universe back in time, there *must* be a starting-point. After admitting the universe had a beginning, most scientists were still reluctant to consider a Creator, and instead embraced the ‘Big Bang’ theory: the idea that a random explosion created the universe.

A simple principle used in investigation is to find a cause that best explains the effect observed. Much can be learned about the cause of an effect just by examining the characteristics of the effect itself. A tree suddenly leaning over with rustling leaves reveals a strong wind blowing in the same direction the tree is leaning. In a similar way, observing the characteristics of the universe should tell us something about what caused it. So is a ‘Big Bang’ explosion really a likely cause for creating a synchronized universe? Three questions need to be considered:

1. *What exploded?* ‘Nothing’ clearly can't explode. Matter is needed. But to say that “*all matter came into existence after matter exploded*” is a clear contradiction. It's basically saying matter created itself, which means it had to exist before it existed! Yet even if we ignore such an obvious contradiction:
2. *What caused the initial-matter to explode?* The law of inertia states that matter stays in a state of rest unless acted upon by an outside force. So *something else* would have had to trigger the explosion. And since an explosion is an *effect* caused by something else, it cannot be the ultimate cause of the universe. Yet even if we overlook this:
3. *Do random explosions create order?* Science is supposed to be based on observation, and observation *always* shows that uncontrolled explosions are a destructive force, not a creative one. Explosions mess things up. They don't arrange things neatly into order. It's therefore contrary to real science to say that this tremendously well-ordered universe is the result of a random ‘Bang’.

Each major advancement in the capability of telescopes reveals that the universe is even more enormous than we previously imagined. Presently it's estimated that there are hundreds of billions of stars in this galaxy alone. Then it's estimated that there are hundreds of billions of galaxies, each with hundreds of billions of stars. To put things in perspective: to walk from earth to the nearest star would take a billion years! So we can't even begin to comprehend the immensity of the universe. Yet we can deduce that its cause must have had *limitless* power to create it. And this matches what the Bible says about God: “You have made the heaven and the earth by Your great power... there is nothing too hard for You” (Jeremiah 32:17).

The cause of the universe and of living things must also be intelligent. Extremely intelligent. Why? Because the quality of the effect reveals the ability-level of its cause. The greater the product's quality, the greater its producer's ability must be. As examples: A brilliant essay requires not just any writer, but a brilliant one. That's why the teacher suspects plagiarism when the essay clearly exceeds the student's intelligence! Anyone involved in computer programming knows that an advanced software program can only be developed by someone with advanced programming skills. Yet the DNA code within the human body is *light-years* beyond *anything* programmers have developed. So if even basic software code can only be written by an intelligent mind, how could the most sophisticated code in the universe (DNA) have been written by unintelligent 'chance'? The ability of the cause must be *at least equal* to the quality of the effect. Therefore the incredible sophistication in creation points to an incredibly sophisticated Creator as its cause.

"*Then who created God?*" is a common objection. But only things that had a beginning need a cause. The universe had a beginning, so it must have been caused by something other than itself. Yet anything *without* a beginning *cannot* have a cause. Why? Because there never was a time it didn't exist. And you can't bring into existence something that's already there. God as described in the Bible is eternal—without a beginning (Deuteronomy 33:27, Psalm 90:2). So God could *not* have been created because He never didn't exist!

"*But how could God have always existed?*" Well, if anything exists now, *something* must be eternal. Otherwise how could *anything* have jumped into existence from absolutely *nothing*? Something must have always been around. There had to be something without a beginning that began everything that *did* have a beginning. So it's perfectly logical to say that God has always existed and that He is the Ultimate Cause of the universe.

The intricacy seen throughout nature is breathtaking, from the astounding complexity of the DNA code to the finely tuned physics of the universe. Such intricacy does not reflect a fluke explosion, but rather the calculated work of an infinitely wise and powerful Creator: "He has made the earth by His power, He has established the world by His wisdom, and has stretched out the heavens by His understanding" (Jeremiah 10:12).

## THE SEED

"And God said, 'Let the earth produce ...the fruit tree that bears fruit according to its kind, whose seed is in itself'" (Genesis 1:11).

Obviously fruit could not have originated without the tree, yet the tree could not have originated without the seed, and yet the seed could not have originated without the fruit in which it is formed. The tree, its fruit, and its seed are interdependent. None of them is viable without the other two. They therefore couldn't have developed by some gradual evolutionary process. It's all or nothing. They had to come into existence at the same time, and fully functional, as recorded in Scripture.

The capability of self-replicating seed is staggering—unlike anything humans have created. The seed reproduces the very plant from which it came, which then produces many identical seeds having the same ability. Though commonly observed, the work of a seed within the soil remains an elusive mystery. Jesus mentioned this: "...A man scatters seed on the ground. Night and day, whether he sleeps or gets up, the seed sprouts and grows, though he does not know how. All by itself the soil produces grain—first the stalk, then the head, then the full kernel in the head" (Mark 4:26-28). The genetic information programmed into a tiny seed, enabling it to perform such remarkable functions requires a formidable Genetic Engineer.

"And the LORD God made all kinds of trees grow out of the ground that are... good for food" (Genesis 2:9).

It's no small thing that fruit is "good for food": so pleasant to the taste *and* nourishing to the body! Artificial foods made by humans simply can't compare to natural fruit with its rich health benefits. A seed becoming a tree producing nutritious fruit which produces new seeds capable of repeating the whole process truly is a wonder. Such a clever renewable food source is evidence for design that is both intentional *and* intelligent!

## THE HEAVENLY LIGHTS

“And God said, ‘Let there be lights in the expanse of the heavens to divide the day from the night, and let them be for signs and seasons, and for days and years, and let them . . .give light upon the earth.’ . . .God made two great lights. The greater light to rule the day, and the lesser light to rule the night. He made the stars also” (Genesis 1:14-16).

In addition to the light they provide, the sun, moon and stars have always served as reliable reference points for our calendars—so consistent in their relationship with earth that we can literally set our clocks by them. As the earth makes its daily rotation, spinning steadily at 1600 kilometers per hour, the sun’s apparent rising and setting facilitates our counting of days. The tilt of earth’s axis enables the variety of seasons as the planet gracefully glides round the sun to measure the span of a year. And as the earth flies through space at a terrifying 107,000 kph, the night stars confirm the time of year. Meanwhile, the moon circles earth at its own steady pace of 3600 kph, acting as a monthly time gauge. Perpetually in motion while floating in space, this heavenly system faithfully maintains our days, months, seasons and years. Is this the work of an arbitrary Big Bang explosion, or of a Divine Watchmaker on the grandest of scales?

The sun, moon, and stars have always functioned as “signs” for travelers on land and sea—like a compass giving an objective sense of orientation. Yet they serve as “signs” in another sense. Jesus spoke of “signs in the sun, and in the moon, and in the stars” preceding coming judgment (Luke 21:25). Similarly, the prophet Joel wrote: “The sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before the coming of the great and awesome day of the Lord” (Joel 2:31), seemingly referring to solar and lunar eclipses.

It’s fascinating that the earth, moon and sun are positioned and sized such that both lunar and solar eclipses can be observed. The moon in its orbit occasionally becomes enveloped by the shadow of the earth, causing it to turn a beautiful red colour. And then on rarer occasions the moon passes right between the earth and the sun, making possible the awe-inspiring phenomenon of a solar eclipse. Of all the moons and planets in the solar system, the only place a perfect solar eclipse can be observed is here on earth—the one place with inhabitants to observe and appreciate it! Consider the math behind these eclipses: The sun is four hundred times larger than the moon, and yet the moon is four hundred times closer to earth than the sun. So from our perspective the sun and moon look identical in size, making an eclipsing moon appear to ‘fit’ the sun perfectly! This reflects precision-engineering of the *highest* order. Not coincidence.

Prior to the telescope, renowned astronomers assumed all the stars could be counted. Yet God had rightly declared that they “cannot be numbered” (Jeremiah 33:22). The Bible revealed the roundness of the earth and that it floats in empty space long before it became possible to make these observations: Scripture states that God “hangs the earth on nothing” (Job 26:7) and speaks of “the circle of the earth” (Isaiah 40:22). And numerous times in Scripture it says that God “spreads out the heavens” (Job 9:8, Psalm 104:2, Isaiah 40:22, Jeremiah 10:12, etc.), a likely reference to the expansion of space, first observed only a century ago!

## DIFFERENT KINDS

“And God made the wild animals according to their kinds, livestock according to their kinds, and all the creatures that move along the ground according to their kinds” (Genesis 1:25).

Among the great variety of animals, we see very distinct *kinds* of animals. Each group shares common characteristics distinguishing them from another group’s characteristics. And each kind of animal can only mate with its own kind, and can only produce offspring of the same kind. For example: dogs only produce dogs. We’ve never seen a dog produce a non-dog.

If the theory of evolution were true and all living things really evolved from a common ancestor, we could expect to see *countless* ‘in-between’ creatures showing the evolutionary links between the various kinds. But this isn’t what we observe. Not among living things, nor among fossils. There ought to be *endless* examples of intermediate varieties to demonstrate step-by-step transformations of one species into another. Yet instead there are endless ‘missing-links’. Observation confirms what’s described in Scripture: distinct kinds of creatures, not a blend of transitional ones.

## LIFE

“And the LORD God formed man from the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and man became a living being.” (Genesis 2:7)

Both the theory of evolution and the Bible state that the human body originally came from the earth. Every chemical element in humans can also be found in the ground. So the question is: Was the body, with its innumerable interdependent parts, created deliberately or by chance? The Bible says it was artistically formed. The theory of evolution says it was accidentally fluked.

Life, as we have observed it, only comes from pre-existing life. Life coming from non-living matter (‘spontaneous generation’) has *never* been observed. Many scientists have attempted through controlled experiments to cause life to arise from non-living matter. Yet despite their efforts (and despite the fact that such controlled experiments cannot be considered ‘spontaneous’) they have failed repeatedly. Non-living matter’s inability to ‘come alive’ is an established scientific fact known as the law of biogenesis, which states that life *only* comes from pre-existing life.

So then what was the life-source for the *first* living being that came into existence? Since life can only come from pre-existing life, the life-source had to be alive and without a beginning, of course. And that’s exactly how the Bible describes the Creator: “the living God” (Deuteronomy 5:26), “the eternal God” (Deuteronomy 33:27).

Even if we could imagine the body’s trillions of cells assembling themselves by accident, the body would only be a lifeless corpse without that necessary ‘spark’ of life and consciousness. The Bible records the critical moment when the Creator breathed life into the body of the first man, causing him to become a living, conscious being.

## MULTIPLICATION

“So God created man in His own image, in the image of God He created him, male and female He created them. Then God blessed them and said to them, ‘Be fruitful and increase in number...’” (Genesis 1:27-28)

Imagine that the first creature could magically evolve itself into existence. How will it now develop the ability to produce offspring within its frail lifespan? Because unless this first creature can reproduce itself, ‘generational evolution’ stops before it even starts! All forms of biological reproduction are *unimaginably* more sophisticated than a smartphone, a space shuttle, or *any* technology. So should we really believe that the ability to reproduce came from the random stirring of mud?

The Bible’s account of reproduction is so much more realistic: God created the first man, then created a suitable match made of the same substance. But although the two had to be human, they couldn’t be identical. God made a male and a female—with totally *different* reproductive systems, yet perfectly *compatible* reproductive systems. Both man and woman had to come into existence at the same time and place, fully functional, in order to produce offspring also capable of reproducing. Jesus said: “...from the beginning of the creation, God made them male and female” (Mark 10:6). Makes sense. Because unless there was man and woman from the very start, there could be no second generation!

From conception to birth, the process of reproduction is tremendously complex. It’s hard to find a more suitable word than ‘miraculous’ to describe the intricate formation of a baby within its mother’s womb. Inside the womb the fragile development of the child’s organs takes place, each having a useful, sophisticated function: “The hearing ear and the seeing eye, the LORD has made them both” (Proverbs 20:12). King David worshipped His Maker, saying: “You have formed my inward parts. You knit me together in my mother’s womb. I praise You because I am fearfully and wonderfully made” (Psalm 139:13-14). Beginning as a single cell, the child develops into an orderly structure consisting of *trillions* of cells. With all the boasting about how much knowledge we have, it’s good to be reminded of everyday-processes far beyond our ability to grasp: “you do not know... how the body forms in a mother’s womb” (Ecclesiastes 11:5). Again: Could such a delicate process result from aimless collisions in a ‘primordial soup’?

## BEAUTY

“The LORD God made all kinds of trees grow out of the ground that are pleasant to the sight...” (Genesis 2:9).

Is it just coincidence that nature is visually pleasing? “Truly the light is sweet, and it is pleasant for the eyes to see the sun” (Ecclesiastes 11:7). Sunrises, flowers, forests, fields, mountains, streams, seashores, blue skies... Why are our natural surroundings filled with such elegant and harmonious beauty? The simple (and reasonable) answer is: Because God creatively designed it that way. Randomness and time simply aren't capable of such extravagant, universal artistry. Would anyone believe that an artist could paint a beautiful landscape while sleeping? Why then should we assume that the beautiful landscape itself was produced by unconscious matter?

A well-known evolutionist once expressed distress at the threat posed to his theory by the feathers of a peacock. Each individual feather consists of numerous hairs streaked with various colours corresponding with their neighbouring hairs to form an exquisite overall pattern, magnificent in appearance. Common sense should be enough to convince us that ‘blind chance’ has no such artistic ability.

Scripture speaks of the beauty of flowers (Isaiah 40:6). It takes skill just to accurately draw a flower onto a flat piece of paper. How much more difficult would it be for ‘chance’ to produce the actual three-dimensional flower, with the ability to grow and self-replicate! Jesus spoke of the flowers with which God “clothes the grass of the field” (Matthew 6:30). Jesus said: “Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow: they neither labour nor spin: and yet I say to you that even Solomon in all his glory was not clothed like one of these” (Matthew 6:28-29). The finest clothing, skillfully woven for the wealthiest of kings, was inferior to the glory of a common wildflower. The most sensible explanation for nature's beauty is that it's the work of a Creator with ‘an eye for beauty’.

## HABITABILITY

“God, who formed the earth... did not create it in vain, but formed it to be inhabited...” (Isaiah 45:18).

As the other planets and moons in the solar system are explored, the uniqueness of the earth's habitability becomes more and more evident in contrast. The earth has countless special characteristics that make it possible for us, not only to survive, but to thrive. Consider the water cycle—a vital process not understood until three hundred years ago, yet accurately described in Scripture three *thousand* years ago: “All the rivers run into the sea, yet the sea is not full. To the place from which the rivers come, there they return again” (Ecclesiastes 1:7). This delicate water cycle is only one among many conditions that have to be set ‘just right’ for us to exist and persist on earth. There are also other essential features like the earth's ideal rotational speed and tilt, its ideal distance from the sun, its land to water ratio, moderate temperature range, oxygen-rich atmosphere, fertile soil, renewable food sources—the list goes on. These life-permitting features are not at all common, as confirmed by the barrenness of neighbouring planets and moons.

In addition to the earth's remarkable life-permitting qualities, the universe has finely tuned physical constants and forces which also make life possible on this planet. Consider the ‘fundamental forces’: the force of gravity, the strong nuclear force, the weak nuclear force and the electromagnetic force. These are all so finely calibrated, that if the strength of any of these forces were adjusted even slightly, we would cease to exist. It's been rightly said that life stands delicately balanced on a razor's edge. Such fine-tuning doesn't occur by itself (as any piano tuner could confirm!).

So should this favourable collection of improbable conditions be considered just good luck? If so, why do we get suspicious when the same guy wins in Bingo for the third time in a row? Luck has its limits. Yet some will still insist: “*Anything is possible given enough time!*” Well, could an orchestra of monkeys unintentionally perform a masterpiece symphony given enough time? Some things (like the conditions necessary for life) are so complicatedly synchronized that they simply cannot be caused by accidental processes—even with *infinite* time. The ultimate reason why we're able to live here is because God, who is infinitely powerful and wise, purposely made the earth to be inhabited.

## CONCLUSION

The Bible's statements about creation match observation, logic, and the principle of cause and effect: This sophisticated universe was produced by a sophisticated Creator, not a 'Bang'. Seed, which was created at the same time as its tree and fruit, was brilliantly engineered to self-replicate, and its fruit was made for our pleasure and nourishment. The precisely-regulated patterns of the solar system which give us a clear sense of time were calculated to do so. All creatures did not evolve from a 'common ancestor', but were created as distinct kinds, only able to mate with their own kind, and only able to produce offspring of same kind. The first man's life-source was the living God, not non-living mud. Man and woman were both created at the very beginning, designed with diverse yet compatible reproductive systems, enabling them to multiply. The stunning beauty in nature is the work of a Master Artist, not chance. And the many life-permitting conditions weren't fluked—they were finely tuned by a Fine Tuner for the purpose of making earth habitable. The evidence is overwhelming.

There's also evidence *about* God and His moral character in the conscience He placed within us—that inner, moral voice which confronts us when we do what is evil. Although it's possible to ignore our conscience, deep down we know that many times we've done what we shouldn't have, and often haven't done what we should have. The reality is that all of us have acted selfishly and have sinned against others and against God. "...evil thoughts, adultery, sexual immorality, murder, theft, coveting, malice, deceit, sensuality, envy, slander, arrogance, foolishness. All these evils come from within and make a person unclean", Jesus said (Mark 7:21-23).

The Bible warns that when our life is over there is a judgment and everything we've done will be brought into the light, "including every secret thing" (Ecclesiastes 12:14). No one is innocent. Because of God's justice, He will punish all injustice and evil. Yet because of His love, He has made a way for us to escape the punishment we deserve, and for our shame to be covered. God sent His Son, Jesus Christ, who lived without any sin and gave His life for us: He died on the cross as our substitute, taking the penalty for our sins, and He rose from the dead three days later. God promises to completely forgive all those who repent—who turn from sin, and trust in Christ to save them.

It's amazing that the Creator of the universe actually cares for us—so much so that He receives those who come to Him as His own children. He gives them the privilege of knowing Him and experiencing His faithfulness. He places His Spirit within them to give them a much greater capacity to love others and to do what is right. And ultimately He will bring them to be with Him forever, in fulness of joy, where "there will be no more death, sorrow, crying or pain" (Revelation 21:4).

There is nothing more meaningful in life than to know the One who made you. And there is no greater purpose than to live for the One who gave Himself for you.

**"ALL THINGS WERE CREATED BY HIM, AND FOR HIM."**

- COLOSSIANS 1:16