

# Maker of Heaven & Earth

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# Introduction

- "I believe in God, the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth..."
- So begins the Apostles' Creed, a very early formulation of historic Christianity.
- Anyone who has read the Bible knows that this is what it teaches also.
- Yet today this belief is widely rejected, especially among people who consider themselves to be well-educated.

# Carl Sagan on the Cosmos

- For instance, Carl Sagan, in his acclaimed PBS series "Cosmos," begins his presentation with these words:
- "The cosmos is all that is, or ever was, or ever will be."



# Introduction

- I have studied science for a number of years myself (I have a PhD in theoretical astrophysics), and I believe in God Almighty, maker of heaven and earth.
- I think there are good reasons for believing this.
- That's what we want to discuss here.

# Introduction

- I believe in God the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth because:
  - The existence of God explains the nature of the universe;
  - The existence of God explains the nature of living things;
  - God said so.
- Let's have a look at these three reasons.

# God's Existence Explains the Nature of the Universe

# The Universe Today

- We currently live in a very large universe, which is billions of light-years across.
  - A light-year = about 6 trillion miles.
- This universe is in the process of expanding.
  - The galaxies are obviously moving apart, and we think that is because space is expanding.

# The Universe Back Then

- The universe was once (early in its history) very dense and very hot.
- We can tell this by extrapolating backwards in time, and by observing remnants of its early history:
  - The cosmic black-body radiation
  - Galaxy-counts and early galaxies
  - Recent evidence that the universe is expanding more rapidly now than earlier



# Is the Universe Oscillating?

- Until the 1990s, this was widely favored as the way to avoid a beginning, e.g., by:
  - Isaac Asimov
  - Carl Sagan
- This now appears to be impossible:
  - Looks like universe will expand forever
  - Looks like a collapsing universe would not bounce to shift into an expanding mode

# Is the Universe Just a Bubble?

- A recent alternative to a universe with a beginning is to claim that our universe had a beginning, but it is just a bubble in an infinite universe with no beginning.
- This cannot be ruled out with our finite human knowledge, but neither do we have evidence for this hypothetical unseen universe outside ours.

# Recent Cosmology

- The history of cosmology in the 20<sup>th</sup> century has been one frantic attempt after another...
  - ... to avoid a universe with a beginning
  - ... in the face of mounting evidence that this is just the sort of universe we live in!
- A universe created at the big bang fits known data better than the alternatives.

# A Fine-Tuned Universe

- In recent decades, physicists and astronomers have noted that the universe also looks designed.
- The basic forces are finely-tuned to permit life in our universe.
- Our own environment here on earth may well be unique in the universe in allowing advanced life.

# Recap

- So I believe in God Almighty, maker of heaven and earth...
- ... because the universe looks like it was created.

# God's Existence Explains the Nature of Living Things

# Origin of Life

- Bible-believers disagree on the age of the earth and whether God used evolution as a part of his creative activity.
- But people who believe that life arose by chance, by purely natural, undirected processes, face insuperable problems.
- Let's see.

# Simple Life

- Even the simplest known life is very complex:
  - Information content of *E. coli* bacteria = ~4000 sets of the *Encyclopaedia Britannica*.
  - The minimal complexity of the simplest known organisms are about 1500 gene products (proteins, etc.) for those which can live independently and about 500 for parasites.



# Producing Order

- It is very hard to produce organization by random processes.
- Consider the problem of getting trained monkeys to type the words "ENCYCLOPAEDIA BRITANNICA"
  - Typing at 3 characters/sec on special monkey-proof typewriters using only capital letters and standard punctuation
  - 30 billion billion billion monkey-years!

# Producing Order

- Consider the problem of forming a simple specified protein:
  - 100 linked amino acids
  - Using the 20 standard amino acids
- Imagine that all the nitrogen in the universe is tied up in 100-link amino acid chains, each of which trade partners as fast as the amino acid can move a short distance at standard temperature & pressure.
- There is only one chance in  $10^{28}$  that the specified protein would be formed in the entire history of the universe!

# Producing Order

- By contrast, minds can produce order very easily (in spite of the college roommate you may have had).
- So the Christian model, that God produced the order seen in living things, is a model that is known to work.
- There is no evidence that the atheistic model of randomness will work.

# Recap

- So I believe in God Almighty, maker of heaven and earth...
- ... because the universe looks like it was created.
- ... because living things look like they were created.

# God Said So

# God said so

- Is this just an appeal to blind faith?
  - Like the statement "God said it, I believe it, that settles it!" is so often claimed to be?
- No, blind faith can be very dangerous.
  - A leap in the dark might land us in the wrong place.
- But believing what turns out to be true can be very advantageous, even if our reasons weren't very good.

# The importance of this point

- When we say we believe in God the creator because he said so, the point is that this belief is not *just* an inference, but it is the result of a communication from God.
- Many people believe in extra-terrestrials, but the evidence would be more conclusive if these beings made a public appearance on the White House lawn.

# Which communication?

- But the human race has many who claim to have received divine revelation...
  - Muhammad
  - Joseph Smith
- How do we know which (if any) is right?
- We try to make this decision by looking at the evidence.



# The evidence

- The Bible provides excellent evidence that it is what it claims to be – communication from the Creator
- See the many materials on our IBRI website: [www.ibri.org](http://www.ibri.org).

# An outline

- **Historical evidence:**
  - The phenomena of Sinai
  - The phenomena of Jesus
- **Prophetic evidence**
  - Jesus: see our PP talk "Jesus, the Testimony of Prophecy & History"
  - Israel: see our PP talk "Israel, Evidence of God in History"
- **Personal evidence**
  - Lives transformed by knowing the Creator
  - Societies transformed by Christianity

# Summary

- The worldviews we call atheism and secular humanism are purely inferential (with some bad inferences).
- They ignore important problems.

# Recap

- So I believe in God Almighty, maker of heaven and earth...
- ... because the universe looks like it was created.
- ... because living things look like they were created.
- ... because God said so.

# Conclusions

- We as Christians certainly do not know all the answers...
  - ... but God does!
  - ... and we need not be ashamed to believe in the God of the Bible, maker of heaven and earth.
- Do you know him?
- May we live for him in such a way as to draw others to him.

# The End

... is just the beginning if you know  
your Creator.