

# GOD, UNIVERSE, AND FAITH

C. Stephen David | *Ekklesia Evangelical Fellowship* | July 2, 2023

**Scripture: Hebrews:11** **1** Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen. **2** For by it the people of old received their commendation. **3** By faith we understand that the universe was created by the word of God, so that what is seen was not made out of things that are visible.

**Background:** “Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen” (v. 1). The writer motivates those who have professed Christ under the threat of persecution to endure to obtain God’s unseen, future promises.

- ❖ **Hebrews 11:3**, By faith we understand that the universe was created by the word of God, so that what is seen was not made out of things that are visible.

## 1. THE UNIVERSE HAS THE BEGINNING

**Hebrews 11:3**, By faith we understand that **the universe was created...**

**Note:** That which has been created has a beginning. It is finite.

- By this statement, we understand that the universe isn’t existing eternally. The universe is not infinite.

**Economic Times:** To the question, “Who created the Universe?”, Paramahansa Sri Nithyananda, wrote, “Christianity and Islam adopted the Judaic version of creation, as laid out in the Book of Genesis. God made the Universe in six days and rested on the seventh. He created man, and from the man’s rib made the woman. Hindu mythology had a different version. So do other cultures and religions. **Buddha said:** *Universe was never created. Universe will never die. Universe has been in existence always, and will be in existence always. Sanatana Dharma, the philosophy of Hinduism, supports Buddha. The Brahman always was, is and will be. Brahman is Existence. Existence is the universe. There never was a time it did not exist, and there never will be a time it would not exist.*<sup>1</sup>

**Albert Einstein’s** theory of relativity means that the universe had a beginning and was not eternal *as he had previously believed*. His theory proved that the universe is not a cause, but instead one big effect—something brought it into existence.

**A good thing about the Big Bang theory:** The big bang is how astronomers explain the way the universe began. The universe has a beginning.

---

<sup>1</sup> Read more at: [https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/who-created-the-universe/articleshow/2882732.cms?utm\\_source=contentofinterest&utm\\_medium=text&utm\\_campaign=cppst](https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/who-created-the-universe/articleshow/2882732.cms?utm_source=contentofinterest&utm_medium=text&utm_campaign=cppst)

Atheism particularly held to the idea of an “infinitely old” universe as a reason to dismiss God as unnecessary.

**Biblical truth:** The universe has a beginning and is not eternal.

## 2. GOD IS THE CAUSE OF THE UNIVERSE.

**The Big Bang Theory:** The Big Bang was the moment 13.8 billion years ago when the universe began as a tiny, dense, fireball that exploded. Most astronomers use the Big Bang theory to explain how the universe began. But what caused this explosion in the first place is still a mystery!

**Question:** Can you believe that because of a big blast in a printing press that a dictionary came into existence?

- Order, design, and intelligence compel us to believe in the Maker.

The ***Kalām Cosmological Argument*** is a 1979 book by the philosopher William Lane Craig argues that **whatever begins to exist has a cause that caused it to begin to exist**. Craig argues that this cause is a personal creator who changelessly and independently willed the beginning of the universe.

**Note:** Everything that has a beginning has a cause. God has no beginning. Hence, He is an uncaused cause.

- ❖ **Hebrews 11:3**, By faith we understand that the universe (aiōn) was created by the word of God...
- ❖ **Hebrews 1:1** Long ago, at many times and in many ways, God spoke to our fathers by the prophets, 2 but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son, whom he appointed the heir of all things, through whom also he created the world (aiōn).

### What does the universe mean here?

**Universe:** Everything that contains space, matter, and energy.

- ❖ **Genesis 1:1**, In the beginning, God created the heavens (skies) and the earth.
- ❖ **Colossians 1:16-17**, For by him all things were created, in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities—all things were created through him and for him. 17 And he is before all things, and in him all things hold together.

**Observation:** The fact that the universe was created by God shows that the universe is distinct from God.

**Pantheism:** All is god, and god is all.

**Panentheism:** God is in everything.

**Biblical truth:** God made everything. God is distinct from everything. He is not in everything.

**Isaiah 40:18** To whom then will you liken God, or what likeness compare with him?  
19 An idol! A craftsman casts it, and a goldsmith overlays it with gold and casts for it silver chains.

20 He who is too impoverished for an offering chooses wood that will not rot; he seeks out a skillful craftsman to set up an idol that will not move.

21 Do you not know? Do you not hear? Has it not been told you from the beginning? Have you not understood from the foundations of the earth?

22 It is he who sits above the circle of the earth, and its inhabitants are like grasshoppers; who stretches out the heavens like a curtain, and spreads them like a tent to dwell in;

23 who brings princes to nothing, and makes the rulers of the earth as emptiness.

28 Have you not known? Have you not heard? The LORD is the everlasting God, the Creator of the ends of the earth.

**Another problem:** Science

**National Academy of Sciences:** Does science disprove the existence of God? Science doesn't have the processes to prove or disprove the existence of God. Science studies and attempts to explain only the natural world while God, in most religions, is supernatural. Science is a powerful tool for understanding and explaining the mechanisms and dynamics of the physical universe. But science can't examine or explain the purpose of the universe. That's a question that falls under theology or philosophy.

**Note:** To claim that science disproves God's existence is like saying math says murder is a crime 🤔

**The following scientist are not necessarily devout Christians but they express their belief in the Creator:**

**Scottish-Irish physicist Sir William Thomson (1824-1907), *physics Formulator of the First and Second Laws of Thermodynamics*:** Do not be afraid of being free thinkers. If you think strongly enough you will be forced by science to the belief in God, which is the foundation of all Religion. You will find science not antagonistic, but helpful to Religion.

**Sir Isaac Newton FRS (1642 – 1726/27) was an English mathematician, physicist, astronomer, alchemist:** This most beautiful system of the sun, planets and comets, could only proceed from the counsel and dominion of an intelligent and powerful Being.

**Philo T. Farnsworth, American inventor of electronic television in 1927,** “I know that I have never invented anything. I have been a medium by which these things were given to the culture as fast as culture could earn them. I give the credit to God.”

**Raymond Damadian, inventor of the MRI:** “As Christians we believe God has placed us here to actually make a difference in the world... For me, I have found a way through scientific discovery.”

**Dr. James Tour [Born 1959]:** is a professor of chemistry, mechanical engineering, and computer science at Rice University. Wikipedia says that Tour was ranked one of the top 10 chemists in the world over the past decade. In his book, *Faith of a Scientist*, he writes:

As a scientist, when posed with scientific mysteries that have presented themselves in my research, I have so often bowed my heart and prayed, “Lord, make your light shine on this darkness. When no others can see, please Lord, let me see.” On many occasions, when graduate students have brought their puzzling laboratory results and laid them on my desk, I have been as baffled as they. So remembering [Psalm 112:4], which I had long before committed to memory, I pray for light, and God answers. Surely, meditating on God’s word can cause light to arise in darkness even for the challenges that confront our secular careers.

**He begins his day six days a week at 3:30 AM with two hours of Bible reading and meditation,** and he then spends from 6 AM to 6 PM in the lab,

**Economic Times: Pat Gelsinger, an American engineer and CEO of Intel who contributed to the development of the Intel 486 processor, and served as a key figure behind modern computer revolution:** I believe we all work for God, not for a boss or for the president of the company. My highest priority is my daily time with God. I make time to pray wherever I may be. When I travel, I have my prayer time on the way to the airport. It's a 45 minute drive and I start by singing a few hymns and then pray through the ACTS acronym (acknowledgement, confession, thanksgiving, supplication), which is a popular form of prayer. When someone asks me "why

aren't you golfing on Sundays?" I don't deflect the question. I say, "I've decided to prioritise my relationship with God and I'm committed to being in church."<sup>2</sup>

### 3. GOD CREATED THE UNIVERSE BY HIS WORD

**Hebrews 11:3**, By faith we understand that the universe was created **by the word of God...**

**Literally:** By means of the word of God, the universe was created.

❖ **Psalm 148:1** Praise the LORD! Praise the LORD from the heavens; praise him in the heights! 2 Praise him, all his angels; praise him, all his hosts! 3 Praise him, sun and moon, praise him, all you shining stars! 4 Praise him, you highest heavens, and you waters above the heavens! 5 Let them praise the name of the LORD! **For he commanded and they were created.**

❖ **Genesis 1:** Six times it says "God said" [context of creation] and it was so.

**By the word of God:** By the command of His mouth

❖ **Romans 4:17**, as it is written, "I have made you the father of many nations"—in the presence of the God in whom he believed, who gives life to the dead and calls into existence the things that do not exist.

**Why did God create the universe by His word?**

**Ex nihilo, nihil fit:** "Out of nothing, nothing comes."

**Ex nihilo:** is Latin for "from nothing." The term **creation ex nihilo** refers to God creating everything from nothing.

❖ **Hebrews 11:3**, By faith we understand that the universe was created by the word of God, **so that what is seen was not made out of things that are visible.**

If there was nothing that existed, the only way God could create is by His Word.

### 4. BY FAITH WE UNDERSTAND THE UNIVERSE WAS CREATED BY THE WORD OF GOD

**Hebrews 11:2** For by it the people of old received their commendation. **3 By faith we understand** that the universe was created by the word of God, so that what is seen was not made out of things that are visible.

---

<sup>2</sup> [https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/we-work-for-god-not-for-a-boss-says-vmware-ceo-pat-gelsinger/articleshow/47187103.cms?utm\\_source=contentofinterest&utm\\_medium=text&utm\\_campaign=cpps](https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/we-work-for-god-not-for-a-boss-says-vmware-ceo-pat-gelsinger/articleshow/47187103.cms?utm_source=contentofinterest&utm_medium=text&utm_campaign=cpps)  
t

**After mentioning people of old and later about these people of old, why does the author speak about God, the universe, and faith in the middle?**

**The greatest miracle of God: Genesis 1:1**, In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth. [He made everything out of nothing]

**Much greatest miracle of God:** The new heavens and the new earth towards which people of the old and new are looking forward to in Christ. [GOSPEL]

- If you believe in the first creation, we must also believe in the second creation of God.

**By faith we understand:** Shows that knowledge is not independent of faith.

**Understand:** Intellectual perception, not emotional perception.

**Augustine:** Faith is an essential ingredient of knowledge. **Credo ut intelligam**

**(ತೃಡೆ ಒಬ್ ಇಂಬಲಿಗಾಂ):** “I believe in order to understand.”

**Biblical faith is:**

- Not wishful thinking.
- Not blind trust based on ignorance.

**R C Sproul:** Knowledge, to be believed, must be intelligible

**Biblical faith is reasonable faith:** Since there must be a cause for all effect, since the Holy Bible is proven to be God’s Word and is flawless, since Jesus Christ is a historical person whose claims are trustworthy—it is a reasonable thing to believe what God’s Word says about the past, present, and future.

**Even if you disbelieve what God’s Word says, you still need faith to believe:**

- Universe is eternal.
- Universe exists by itself. (this requires more faith than creation)
- Universe came into existence because of Big Bang.

**Astrophysicist Dr. Robert Jastrow** (astronomer and physicist) phrased it this way in his book **God and the Astronomers** (New York: W.W. Norton, 1978, p. 116): “For the scientist who has lived by his faith in the power of reason, the story ends like a bad dream. He has scaled the mountains of ignorance; he is about to conquer the highest peak; as he pulls himself over the final rock, he is greeted by a band of theologians who have been sitting there for centuries.