

Intro: What does God want for America? He wants men and women like those in **1 Chronicles 12:32**. *"Of Issachar, men who had understanding of the times, to know what Israel ought to do, 200 chiefs, and all their kinsmen under their command."* The men of Issachar knew what Israel ought to do at that particular time because they were men who understood their times.

In order to know what we ought to do in America, we must first have a better understanding of the times in which we live. We are at a time of war and the stakes are high. We are battling for the hearts, minds, and souls of the young and old of America. The danger is real. The need is real. Unfortunately, for some it's already too late.

It's too late for one scientist, E. O. Wilson, who is an evolutionary entomologist and sociobiologist has to say. *"As were many persons from Alabama, I was a born-again Christian. When I was fifteen, I entered the Southern Baptist Church with great fervor and interest in the funda-mentalist religion; I left at seventeen when I got to the University of Alabama and heard about evolutionary theory."*

We continue this Sunday with our series on Fact or Fantasy. Today we look at the first verse of the Bible where it addresses the issue of "In the beginning." Why do scientists work day and night to discover the beginning of the universe, the beginning of life, and the beginning of humankind? There is something inside of us that yearns to know how we and the universe began.

Read Text: Genesis 1:1

In order to understand the times in which we live we must realize that the world is viewed through one of four windows. Imagine you're in a house that only has four windows in it. If you look out the north window you see only that which is on that side of the house. If you look through the south window, you see only what is on the south side of the house. The same is true for the east and west side of the house.

It's like that in life. What we see is determined by how we look at life. There are four ways or windows through which we look at life.

I. The Four Windows

The four windows are atheism, agnosticism, theism, and revealism. The first two, atheism and agnosticism are similar, and the second two are similar. The vast majority of the world looks through the windows of theism and revealism, but an increasing number are looking at the world through the windows of atheism and agnosticism.

In order to understand the times in which we live, we must understand the windows through which people view life. According to the most recent data which was gathered last year, 3.1 % of Americans claim to be atheists.

1. Atheism

Atheism takes the view that there is no such thing as the supernatural or the metaphysical. Everything can be explained by naturally occurring processes. This means there is no God or spiritual aspects to life. Any supposed miracle must have a scientific explanation.

Those who look through this window cannot and will not see any evidence of God's presence or handiwork. Their mindset or window will filter out any signs or evidence of God and the supernatural.

The next window is that of agnosticism.

2. Agnosticism

The agnostic takes the view that God may or may not exist, but we can never know either way. The agnostic lives his or her life as if there is no God, while allowing for the possibility of there being a God. They make up 4 % of the American population. They also view everything from a naturalist mindset, thus believing there is a natural explanation for everything.

The third window is that of theism.

3. Theism

Theism includes everyone who believes in the existence of God, regardless of whether they are a member of any organized religion or denomination.

This group believes that God created the universe, and all that's in it, including all forms of life. They usually believe in miracles, prayer, and for the most part, eternal life of some sort.

The last group is what I call revealism.

4. Revealism

Revealists not only believe in God like all theists do, but they also believe that God has revealed Himself to us by way of the Bible. They believe we can know who God is, what God wants, and how to have a personal relationship with God by way of the Bible.

Those in the atheistic and agnostic camps see things much differently than those in the theistic and revealistic camps. So beware of this as you send your daughter or son off to college. Surveys point out that, *"The more "elite" the university, the more pervasive the unbelief. At "elite doctoral universities," 36.5% of professors are agnostics or atheists, a figure that drops to 22.7% at "nonelite doctoral granting universities" and 15.3% at community colleges. Conversely, 44.5% of community-college professors have no doubt that God exists, compared to only 20.4% of professors at elite doctoral universities.*

The differing fields of study in colleges also make a big difference in how they view the world. *"While only 6.1% of "health" professors were atheists or agnostics, this figure was 29.3% for humanities, 32.6% for computer science and engineering, 39.4% for social sciences, and a*

whopping 42.4% for physical and biological sciences. When disciplines were divided more finely, biologists and psychologists nearly tied as the most heathen, with 60.8% of biologists and 60.9% of psychologists being agnostics and atheists..." (whyevolutionistrue.wordpress.com).

Before you send your child off to a particular university or college, prepare them for the times they will be living in while in college.

How do we do this? We start by looking at the origin of the universe.

II. The Origin of The Universe

Those looking through atheistic and agnostic windows are limited to scientific theories as possibilities for the universe's origin.

1. Scientific Theories

These scientific theories for the creation of the universe are the ones that our children will be exposed to when they enter college. Such exposures, whether outwardly stated, or subtly implied, teaches that God is not needed to explain creation.

There are two laws of physics that come into play when we ask questions about the origin of the universe. One of the most universal laws of physics, the second law of thermodynamics. It simply states that, left to themselves, things break down. Everything from living creatures to buildings, bridges, and even rock, will eventually break down if something is not done by someone to maintain it. Consequently, modern science has concluded that the universe was created in a primordial explosion of energy and light which is referred to as the Big Bang theory.

According to three British astrophysicists, Steven Hawking, George Ellis, and Roger Penrose, *"time and space had a finite beginning that corresponded to the origin of matter and energy."*³ *The singularity didn't appear in space; rather, space began inside of the singularity. Prior to the singularity, nothing existed, not space, time, matter, or energy - nothing. So where and in what did the singularity appear if not in space? We don't know. We don't know where it came from, why it's here, or even where it is. All we really know is that we are inside of it and at one time it didn't exist and neither did we."* (See more at: <http://www.big-bang-theory.com/#sthash.bOTfFRYs.dpuf>)

The article I read goes on to mention the idea of God. It says, *"Any discussion of the Big Bang theory would be incomplete without asking the question, what about God? This is because cosmogony (the study of the origin of the universe) is an area where science and theology meet. Creation was a supernatural event. That is, it took place outside of the natural realm. This fact begs the question: is there anything else which exists outside of the natural realm? Specifically, is there a master*

Architect out there? We know that this universe had a beginning. Was God the "First Cause"? We won't attempt to answer that question in this short article. We just ask the question: (See more at: <http://www.big-bang-theory.com/#sthash.bOTfFRYs.dpuf>)

I will attempt to answer it and the answer is yes.

2. Creator God

The singularity refers to a single point at which all of the universe was created from. According to these scientists, it has to be outside of our universe as we know it. It has to be outside of time and space as we know it. The universe suddenly appeared out of nothing. And from that moment on, the universe has been expanding and winding down as the energy that set it into motion gradually fades.

Our text says that "In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth. The today's verse located in your bulletin is from **Hebrews 11:3**. It states, *"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."* It says what is seen was not made out of things that are visible. That's exactly what the most brilliant scientists of today are saying. There was nothing and then there was the universe.

The scientists accept the fact that the universe had to have a beginning because of another law of physics that states, *"every effect has to have a cause."* If we have a universe, something must have caused it. And although they can point to the Big Bang as the beginning of the universe, they still don't know the cause, what brought it about.

Those looking through the atheist or agnostic windows cannot allow God in as the cause, but the theists and revealists do.

Although the book of Genesis was written over 3,400 years ago, before we knew anything about science, laws of physics, or the Big Bang, it tells us that God created the universe out of nothing. The book of Psalms tell us that God created the universe with His Word. He spoke the universe into existence. *"By the word of the LORD the heavens were made, and by the breath of his mouth all their host. 7 He gathers the waters of the sea as a heap; he puts the deeps in storehouses. 8 Let all the earth fear the LORD; let all the inhabitants of the world stand in awe of him! 9 For he spoke, and it came to be; he commanded, and it stood firm" (Psalm 33:6-9).*

The Bible points to God as the creator of the universe. Although science may deny the possibility of God, its understanding of how the universe came into existence fits perfectly with the Bible's description of how God created the universe.

Instead of contradicting the Biblical account of creation, science gives weight to it. The same is true

concerning the origin of life. Science gives weight to the idea of God being the creator of life.

III. The Origin of Life

Many scientists have worked hard to come up with an answer other than God for how life has come about on earth. Charles Darwin came up with the theory of evolution to explain how humankind came into existence, but his theory never explained how life itself got started.

Here are a few scientific theories on the origin of life that have evolved from a non-theist position.

1. Scientific Theories

1) **The Electric sparks theory:** In this electric sparks generates amino acids and sugars from an atmosphere loaded with water, methane, ammonia and hydrogen, as was shown in the famous Miller-Urey experiment reported in 1953, suggesting that lightning might have helped create the key building blocks of life on Earth in its early days. Over millions of years, larger and more complex molecules could form.

2) **The Community Clay theory:** The first molecules of life might have met on clay, according to an idea elaborated by organic chemist Alexander Graham Cairns-Smith at the University of Glasgow in Scotland. These surfaces might not only have concentrated these organic compounds together, but also helped organize them into patterns much like our genes do now.

3) **The deep-sea vent theory:** suggests that life may have begun at submarine hydrothermal vents, spewing key hydrogen-rich molecules. Their rocky nooks could then have concentrated these molecules together and provided mineral catalysts for critical reactions. Even now, these vents, rich in chemical and thermal energy, sustain vibrant ecosystems.

4) **The Panspermia theory:** Perhaps life did not begin on Earth at all, but was brought here from elsewhere in space is known as the panspermia. For instance, rocks regularly get blasted off Mars by cosmic impacts, and a number of Martian meteorites have been found on Earth that some researchers have controversially suggested brought microbes over here, potentially making us all Martians originally. Other scientists have even suggested that life might have hitchhiked on comets from other star systems. But this doesn't answer the question of how did life began elsewhere in space.

The theists and revealists see God as the answer to these questions and the amazing thing is that science also points that direction.

2. God

I admit that I have always believed God was the great creator of all things. I believed it because I was raised in an environment that taught me to believe that way. However, such a belief cannot be

defended, and neither can it be used to convince others to believe God is the creator of life, for we live in a time of science and knowledge. We must seek to do so by the use of science.

Andrew Flew was an aggressive atheist who lectured, wrote books, and debated those who believed in God as an effort to promote atheism. But after 50 years of promoting atheism, he came to believe in God. He became a theist.

In 2004, at New York University, he declared that he 'now accepted the existence of a God' (p. 74). In that debate, he said that he believed that the origin of life points to a creative Intelligence, 'almost entirely because of the DNA investigations. What I think the DNA material has done is that it has shown, by the almost unbelievable complexity of the arrangements which are needed to produce (life), that intelligence must have been involved in getting these extraordinarily diverse elements to work together. It's the enormous complexity of the number of elements and the enormous subtlety of the ways they work together. The meeting of these two parts at the right time by chance is simply minute. It is all a matter of the enormous complexity by which the results were achieved, which looked to me like the work of intelligence' (p. 75).

The complexity of the genetic code led Flew to believe that the origin of life required a 'creative intelligence'.

Science doesn't conflict with a belief in God, unless you only look at it through the window of atheism or agnosticism. In fact, science actually supports a belief in God as the great creator.

This leads to the issue of God's reality.

IV. The Reality of God

How can we know God is real? Science is discovering what the Bible has been saying for centuries. *"The heavens declare the glory of God, and the sky above proclaims his handiwork"* (Psalm 19:1). We need only look at the evidence. We need only look at the heavens, and God's creation as a whole. Whether the Big Bang or DNA, they all point to God, provided we allow for the possibility of God in our world view.

Many scientists have been reluctant to accept the Big Bang theory because it gives weight to the Biblical account of creation. It involves a supernatural explanation. As one scientist, Arno Penzias, who won the Nobel prize for his discovery of the cosmic background radiation that corroborated the Big Bang, said, *"The best data we have are exactly what I would have predicted had I nothing to go on but the five books of Moses, the Psalms, and the Bible as a whole."*

Astronomer Robert Jastrow states, *"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."

Conclusion: Mr. Flew, the former atheist, after finally concluding that the fine-tuning of the universe at every level is simply too perfect to be the result of chance, is reported to have said that his change of heart was in keeping with his lifelong commitment *"to go where the evidence leads," (so) he now believes in God."*

The evidence takes us to God. He is real and He has revealed Himself through His Son--Jesus, and His Word--the Bible. Jesus came, lived a perfect life, died on the cross, and rose from the grave. He now seeks to restore all things back to its rightful state. He seeks to save the lost, give hope to the hopeless, and help to the helpless as we will let Him.

Series: FACT OR FANTASY

In The Beginning

Text: Genesis 1:1

**Mobile Messages
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