

International Conversation Café

Community Group: Where Did the Universe Come From?

What do most people from your country believe about the beginning of the universe?

Throughout the world, people have lots of ideas about where the universe came from, and they're all very different. Can we know who is right? Let's see what **scientific observation** and **reasoning** can tell us. After that, we will look at the Bible and see if what it can tell us.

Here are three logical steps to help us see where the universe came from:



1. Whatever **has a beginning** has a cause.

Who here has ever seen anything appear out of nowhere, for absolutely no reason?

We never see things appear for no reason, and we trust that they never will. While we are at class, we never worry that a live goat will appear from nowhere and begin eating our furniture, because we know that things like this don't happen.

2. The universe **had a beginning**.

This has been disputed throughout history. In the last hundred years, however, scientific observation has pointed toward the universe having a beginning. Einstein's equations from 1915 show that the universe must either be **expanding**, or **contracting**, but not staying the same. Most people assumed, then, that it would be contracting. But it was discovered that the universe was actually expanding, very very fast!

If we look back, there had to be a point in time where it started expanding, from a tiny point in space. It is now widely believed that the universe, space, and time, had their beginning at a single event in the past, referred to as the Big Bang.

3. Therefore, the universe had a **cause** for it to begin.

If the universe had a beginning, and everything with a beginning has to have a cause, then the universe must have a cause as well. Let's see what we can learn about that cause.

What are your thoughts thus far?

We can learn several things about the cause of the universe from the points above.

1. This "first cause" must not be caused, and without beginning, or else he/it would also need a cause.
2. Since this cause created time, space, and matter, he/it must not be bound or restricted by time, space and matter.
3. To create the universe, he/it would need to have enormous power. We can know one more thing about this first cause, and this last one is the most important. The cause of the universe must be a *mind*, not a physical force or law (like electricity or gravity). Physical forces cannot

cause anything to happen if there is nothing to move. They need matter to act on. They do not create matter out of nothing. Instead, the cause of the universe must be a mind, free to act on his own will. The cause of the universe must have been able to decide to create the universe. These qualities all describe God.

Do you agree, disagree, and why?

Does the Bible match what we have seen through science and philosophy? Let's find out! Genesis 1:1, the very first sentence of the Bible says: "In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth." This shows from the beginning that God created the earth, and that he was the cause for the beginning of the universe. The ancient **Hebrews** knew this long before modern scientists discovered it. God continues on to create light, the sky, the oceans, dry land, the sun, moon, and stars, plants, animals, and finally people. Verse 31 says: "Then God looked over all he had made, and he saw that it was very good!"

According to the Bible, where did the universe come from?

According to Science, where did the universe come from?

In Exodus 3:14, God tells Moses to go tell his people about who he is and what he wants to do. Moses asks God what his name is, so that he can tell the Israelites. "God replied to Moses, 'I AM WHO I AM.' Say this to the people of Israel: I AM has sent me to you." God uses the name "I AM" to refer to Himself, because he has no beginning and no creator. He simply is. He simply exists, and his existence needs no cause.

Where did God come from? Is that a trick question?

According to science, does God have a cause? What about according to the Bible?

What new ideas to you have been presented with here?

What further questions would you like to investigate?

For more on the subject of scientific evidence for God, there are several books by a man named Lee Strobel. He was an atheist, and he decided to try to prove God *didn't* exist, but after looking at the evidence, he changed his mind and became a Christian! These books may be a good place to continue your investigation.

1. The Case for Christ
2. The Case for Faith
3. The Case for a Creator

