

Questions for Lesson 2: The Beginning of the Cosmos

1. What is the starting point for the discussions in this series?

Answer: That we are willing to agree that we exist--that there is reality.

2. What do we mean by the word "proof"?

Answer: In these programs, we are defining proof as the weight of the evidence--not absolute proof. Absolute proof would leave no room for faith. In reality, there is no such thing as absolute proof. Philosophy students will enjoy debating this one.

3. Why do atheists tend to embrace the idea that there was no beginning?

Answer: Because it avoids having to deal with the question of what caused the beginning. It is easier to avoid the subject by just saying that matter/energy is eternal in some way.

4. How do we know from examining galaxies that the creation had a beginning?

Answer: The cosmos is expanding from a common point in space which marks a beginning.

5. How do we know that we do not live in an oscillating universe that expands and collapses and then expands again forever?

Answer: The cosmos has been proven to be accelerating, not slowing down. That means it cannot collapse. If you press on the accelerator of your car, you do not slow down. This new discovery makes the oscillating universe an impossibility.

6. Why is finding life on Mars not an issue in this discussion?

Answer: The bible doesn't say this is the only place that God created life. Life on Mars could have come from the earth when massive volcanic eruptions or asteroid strikes hit the earth and blasted surface material into space.

7. Is the big bang more compatible with the Bible or with atheist views?

Answer: It is much more consistent with the biblical view. All it is talking about is how space/time changed once it was created. It does not explain the origin of space/time. Atheists hate this theory because it does not tell what banged or who banged it.

8. What is the difference between asking where God came from and asking where matter came from?

Answer: When we ask about the origin of matter we are talking about a space- and time-dependent quantity that conforms to all physical laws of chemistry and physics. When we talk about God we are talking about a timeless being that is unlimited in space and not subject to the laws of science. God created time, space, and the laws of physics and chemistry, so obviously he is not controlled by them.

9. What are the three claims made by atheists and addressed in this series of lessons?

Answer: (a) The cosmos is eternal.

(b) The cosmos is self existing (uncaused).

(c) The cosmos was not created. (In other words not the product of any gods.)

10. Some have proposed there are parallel universes with matter/energy oscillating back and forth between those universes. Why is this not a proof that the cosmos has always been?

Answer: First of all, this is a theory. It is based on some observations in quantum mechanics which deal with the very small subatomic world and not the cosmos as a whole. There is no evidence that there are parallel universes or that anything is entering our universe from another one. If this is proven to be true, the question will still be the origin of the whole system—our universe and the parallel universes.