



Why God...?
A Beginning Cause

The Essentials of Apologetics

Introduction

The Most Basic Question in Philosophy

“Why is there something
rather than nothing?”

- G. W. Leibniz

“The Principles of Nature and of Grace, Based on Reason”



“Why do we have something
rather than nothing at all?”

-Martin Heidegger

“The Fundamental Question of Metaphysics”



Four Possible Options for Reality

1. Reality is an illusion
2. Reality is self-created
3. Reality is self-existent
4. Reality was created by something that is self-existent



Examining the Options

An Appeal to the Best Explanation for Reality

Reality an Illusion?



Student: “Professor, I’m not sure I even exist!”

Professor: “Who, then, may I say is asking?”

- You must exist to deny your own existence; it is self-defeating to claim you don’t exist and are just an illusion.
- Illusions require something experiencing the illusion.
- In other words, reality is not an illusion.

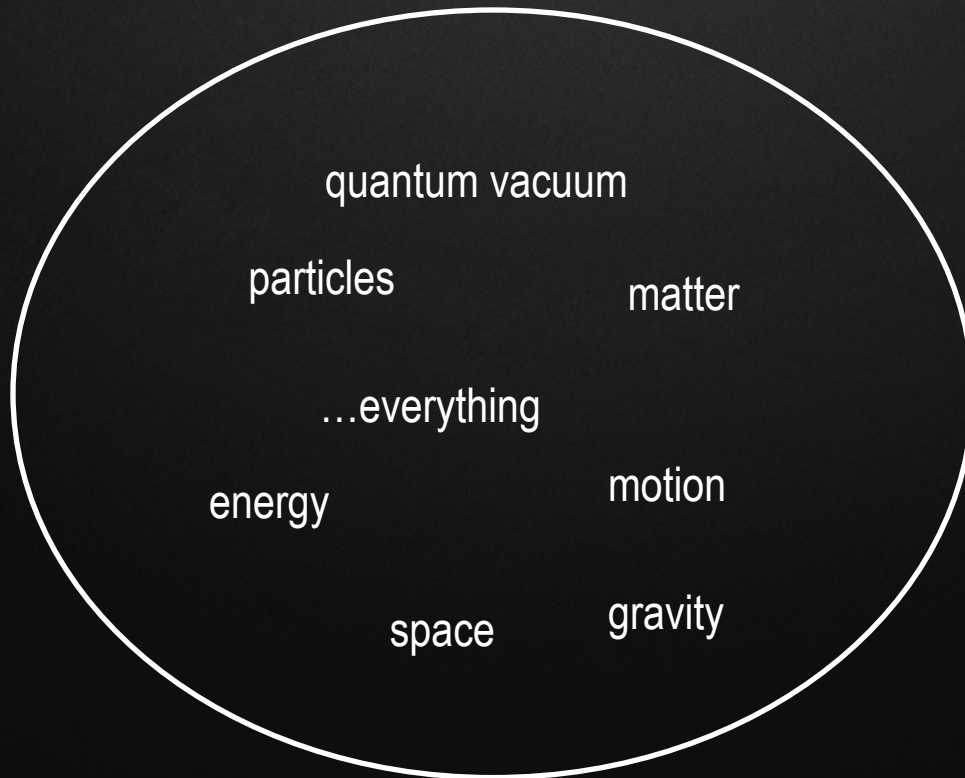
Reality Self-Created?

“Because there is a law like gravity, the universe can and will create itself from nothing”

– Stephen Hawking
The Grand Design

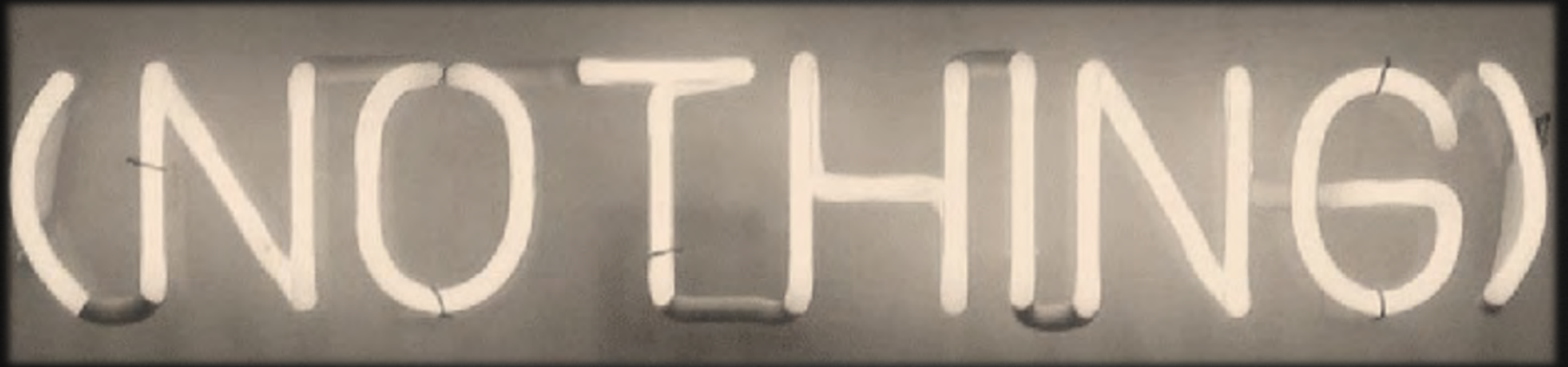


First Problem with Self-Creation



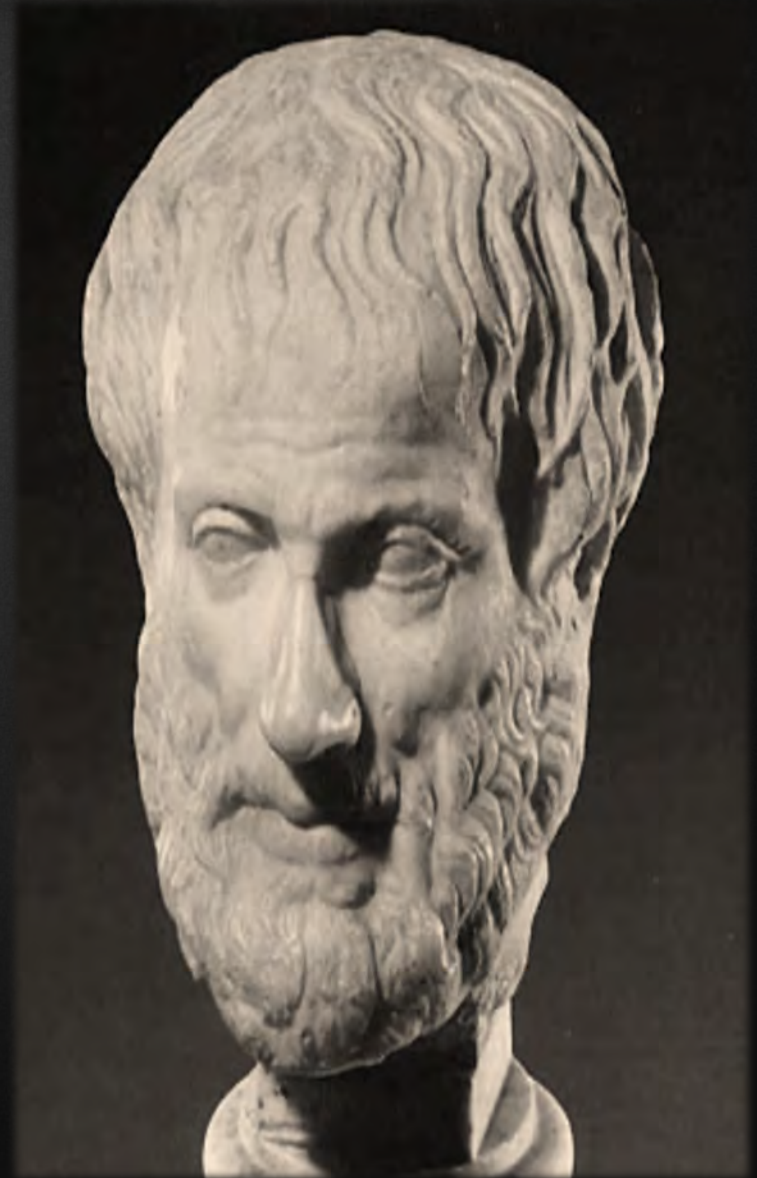
← Are these 'nothing'?

First Problem with Self-Creation



← This is 'nothing'

“Nothing is what rocks dream
about.”
- Aristotle



“Hawking's argument appears to me even more illogical when he says the existence of gravity means the creation of the universe was inevitable. But how did gravity exist in the first place? Who put it there? And what was the creative force behind its birth?”

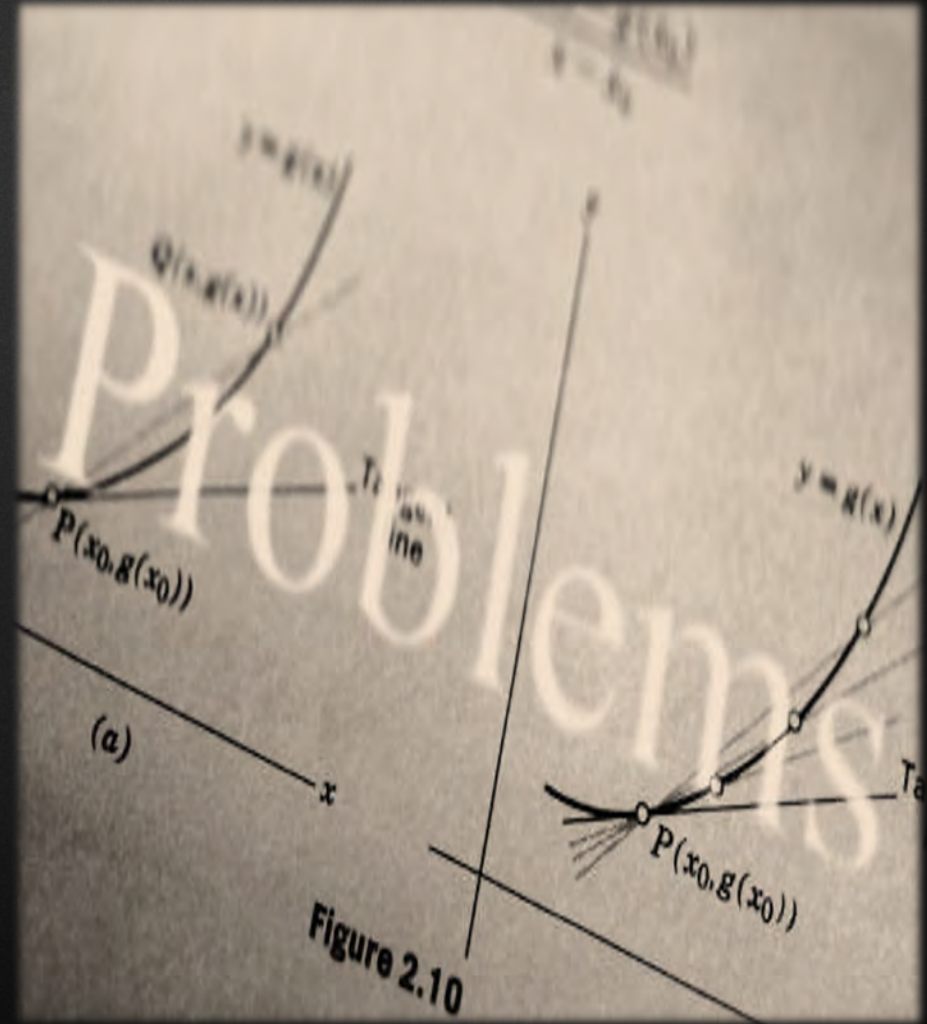
Similarly, when Hawking argues in support of his theory of spontaneous creation that it was only necessary for 'the blue touch paper' to be lit to 'set the universe going', the question must be: where did this blue touch paper come from? And who lit it, if not God?”

- John Lennox



Second Problem with Self-Creation

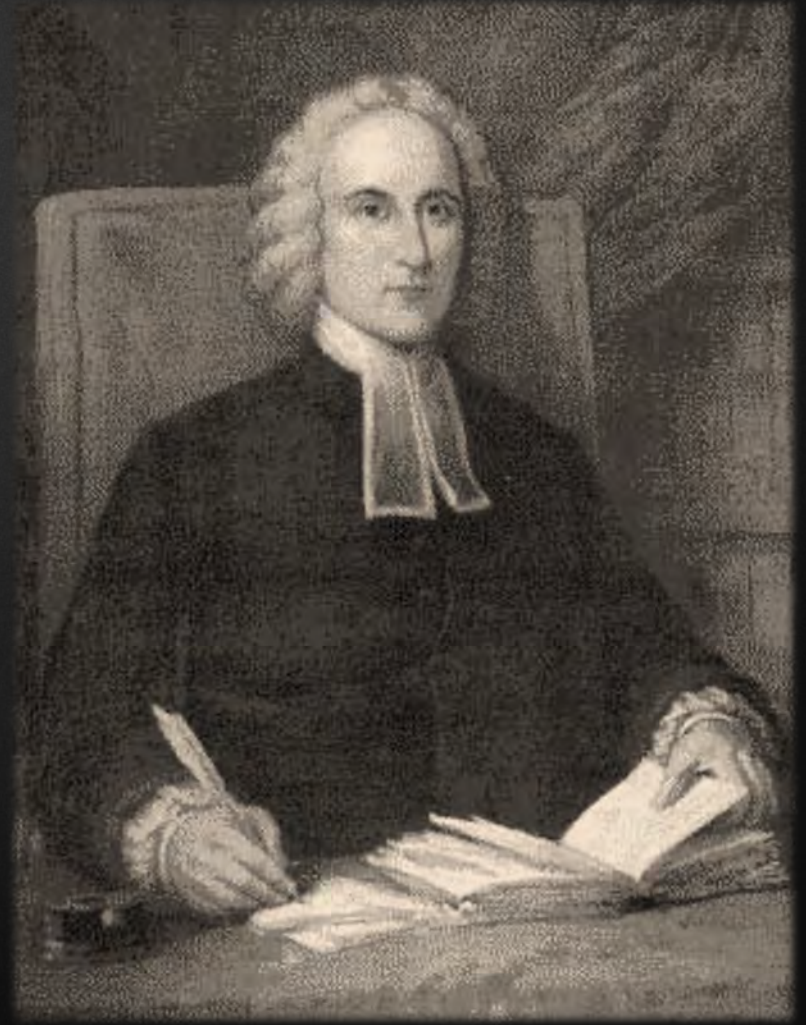
- A thing cannot be ontologically prior to itself
- To create yourself, you must have existed prior to yourself
- Self-creation fails as an explanation because it is **analytically false**



Two Options Down, Two to Go...

- Something exists
- Nothing cannot create something
- Therefore, a necessary and eternal being exists

- Jonathan Edwards



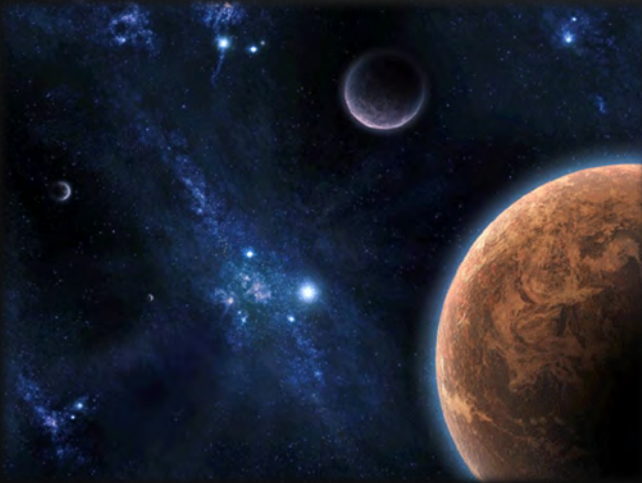
Two Options for a Necessary & Eternal Being

1 An Eternal Universe

“The Cosmos is all there will ever be” – Carl Sagan

2 An Eternal Creator

“In the beginning, God...” – The Bible



VS.



“There are not many options – essentially just two. Either human intelligence ultimately owes its origin to mindless matter; or there is a Creator. It is strange that some people claim that it is their intelligence that leads them to prefer the first to the second.”

- John Lennox



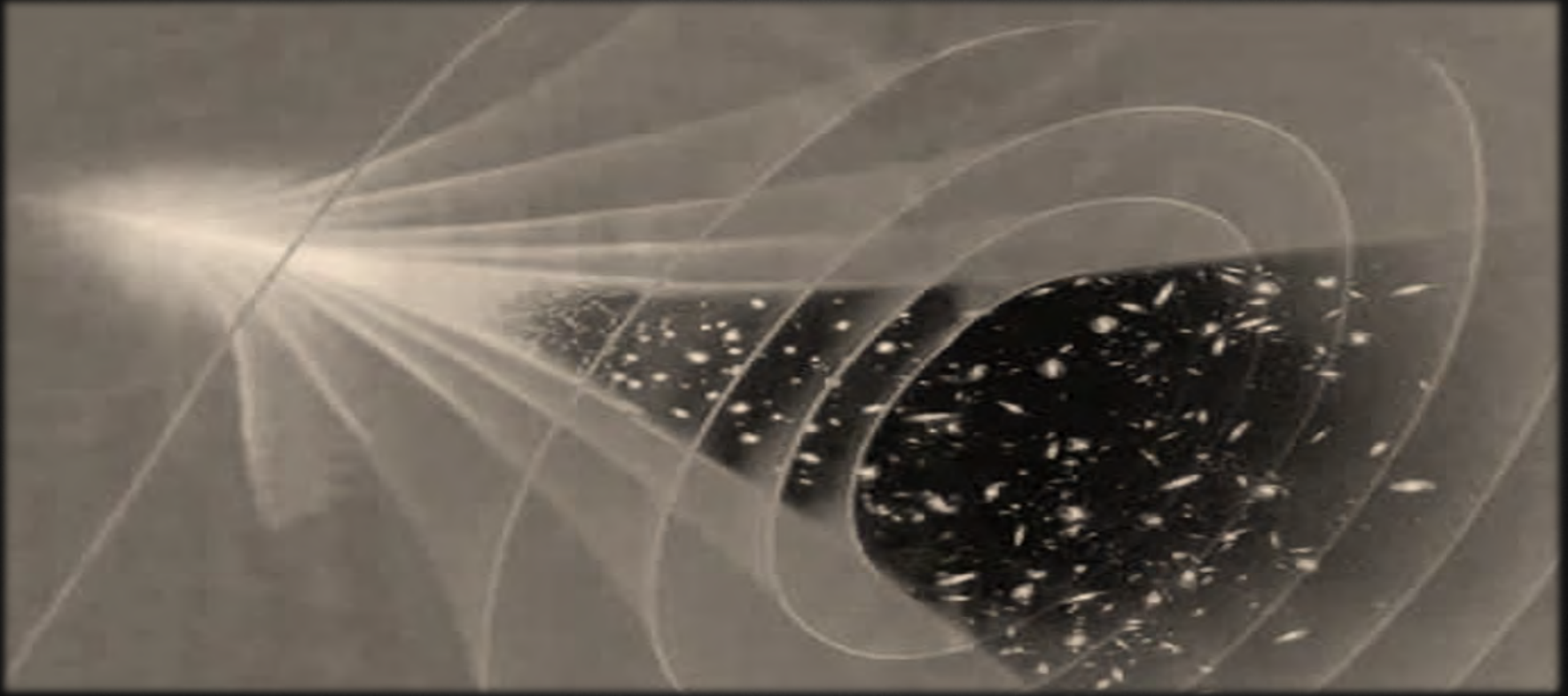
So Which Is It?



“However concrete physical reality is sectioned up, the result will be a state of affairs which owes its being to something other than itself.”

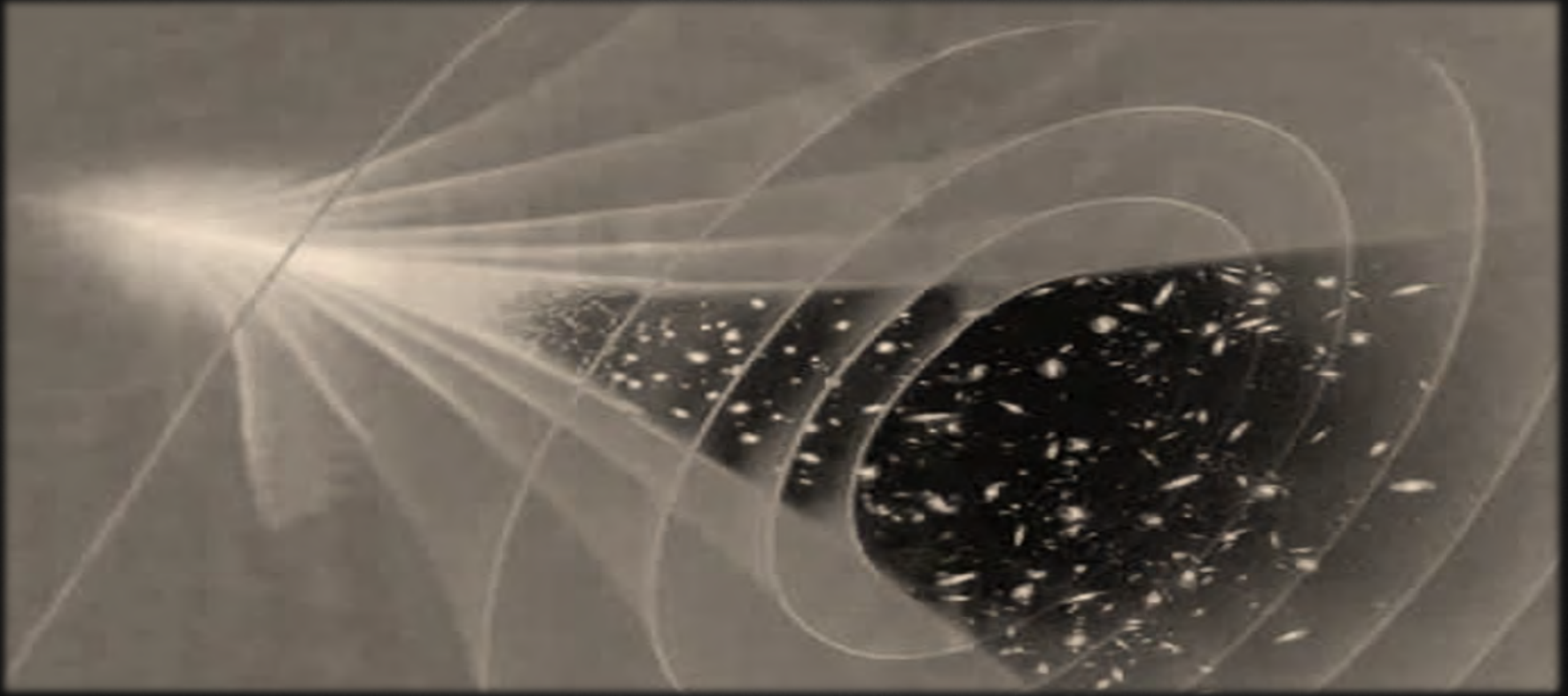
– Dallas Willard

Why Think the Universe Is Not Eternal?



- All current scientific evidence points to a beginning of the universe
- If the universe had a beginning then it has not always existed
- If the universe hasn't always existed, then something else must

The Kalam Cosmological Argument for God



- Everything that begins to exist has a cause
- The universe began to exist
- Therefore, the universe has a cause

Why Think the Universe Had a Beginning?



Explore The Possibilities

- **Second Law of Thermodynamics** – the universe is running down
- **Expanding Universe** – confirmed through Hubble telescope
- **Radiation Echo** – discovered in the 1930's; evidence for big bang
- **Galaxy Seeds** – discovered in the 1990's by COBE explorer
- **Einstein's theory of relativity** – proves universe had a beginning

Why Think Something Needs a Cause?



- Infinite series of regresses – not possible
- Things popping into existence from nothing – never observed (why think a tiger just won't pop into existence right next to you now?)

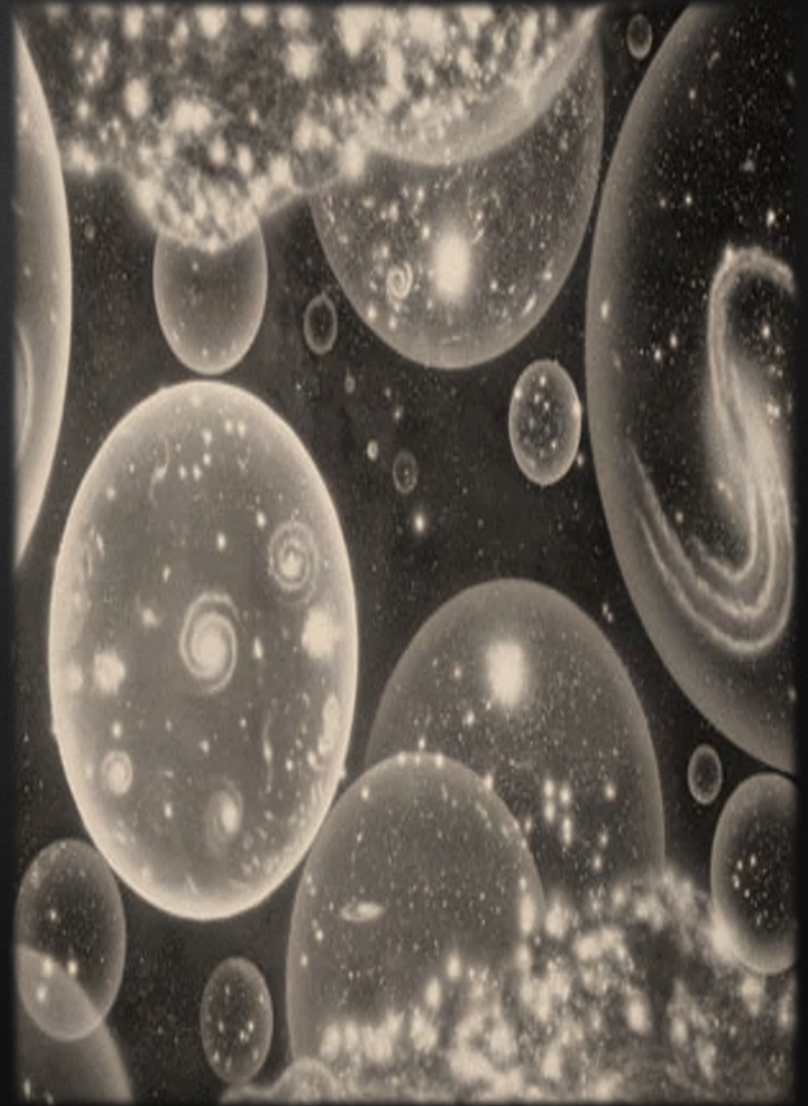
What about the Quantum Vacuum?

- Does Quantum Mechanics (QM) show that things come into existence from nothing?
- At least 10 different interpretations exist of the mathematical equations of QM, some fully deterministic and some indeterminate.
- No one knows which is correct
- More importantly, the quantum vacuum is not 'nothing'.
- The vacuum is a sea of fluctuating energy governed by physical laws having a physical structure. No evidence suggests that things come into being from nothing.



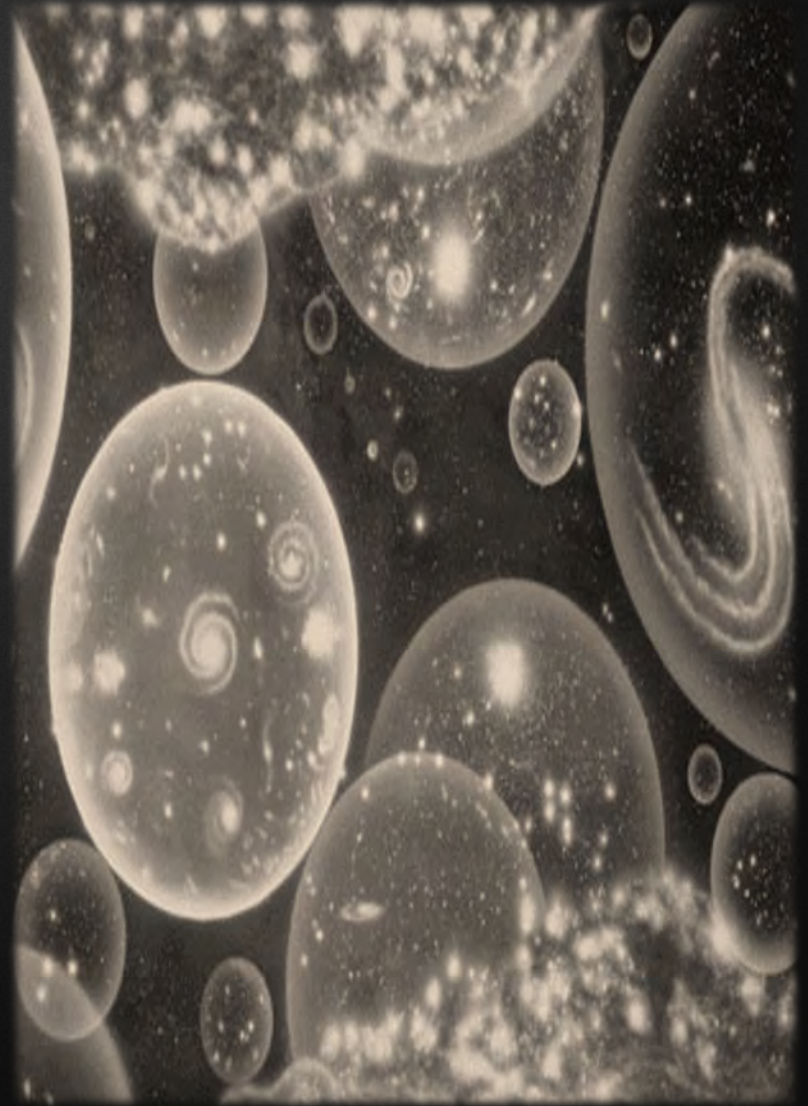
What about the Multi-Verse?

- The multiple universe theory postulates the simultaneous existence of many, possibly infinitely many, parallel universes in which almost anything which is theoretically possible.
- A multi-verse still has the problem of an infinite regress. Such an issue is not limited to this universe; it applies to any reality.
- Scientifically, there is no evidence for it, and good reasons for thinking that such a thing does not exist. No model has evidence showing any reality that extends into the infinite past.



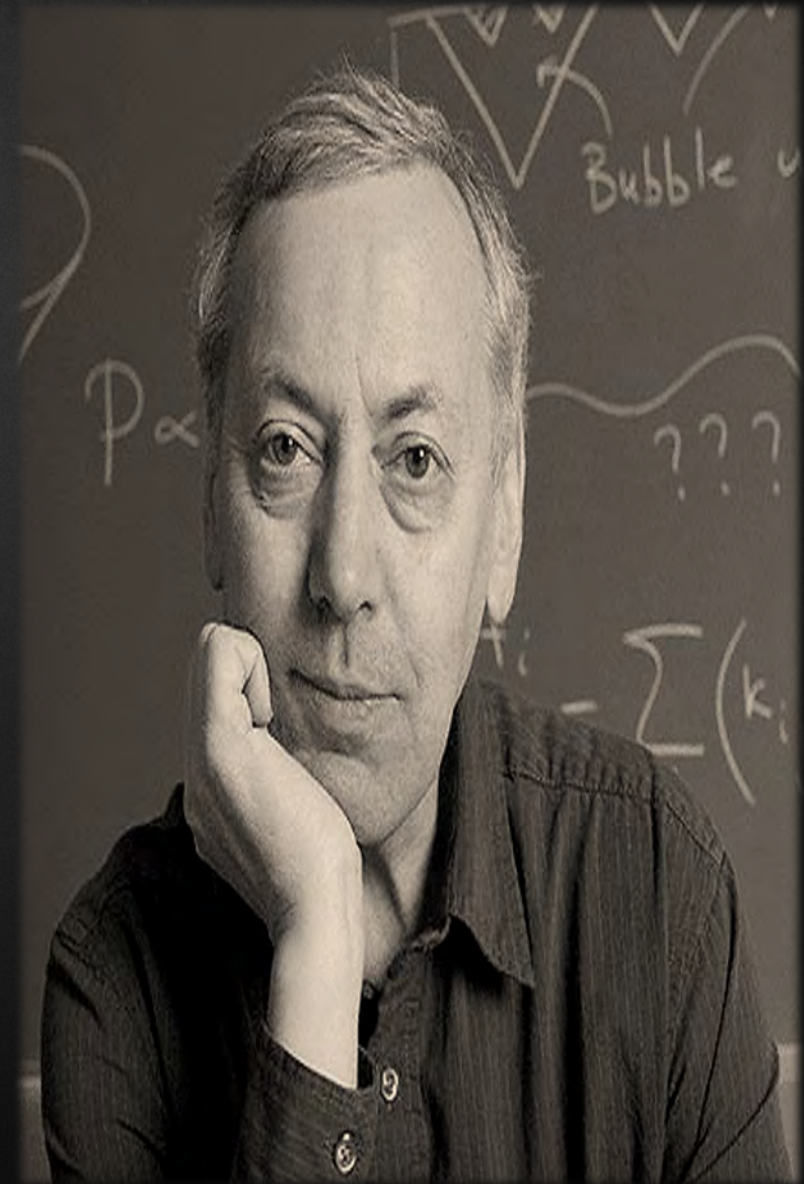
What about the Multi-Verse?

- In 2003, Arvind Borde, Alan Guth, and Alexander Vilenkin were able to prove that any universe which has, on average, been expanding throughout its history cannot be infinite in the past but must have a past space/time boundary.
- What makes their proof so powerful is that it holds regardless of the physical description of the very early universe.
- Their theorem implies that the quantum vacuum state which may have characterized the early universe cannot be eternal in the past but must have had an absolute beginning.

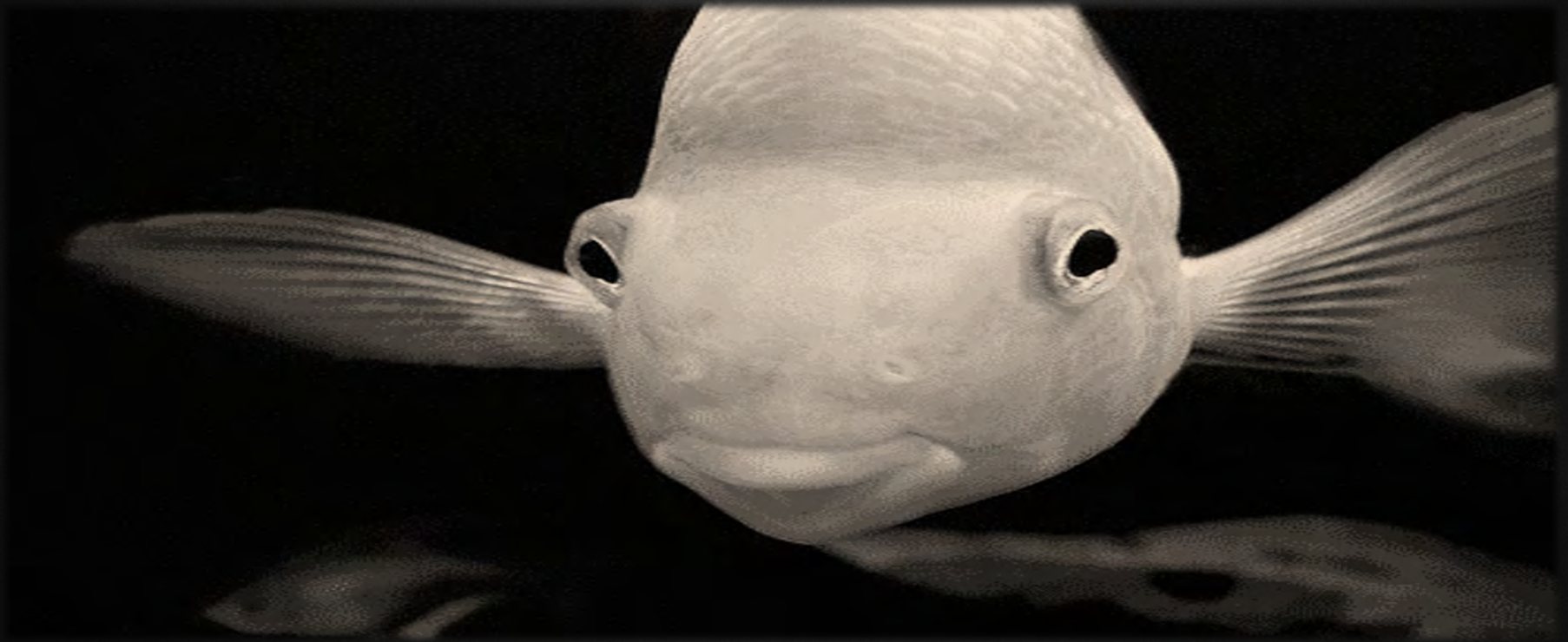


“It is said that an argument is what convinces reasonable men and a proof is what it takes to convince even an unreasonable man. With the proof now in place, cosmologists can no longer hide behind the possibility of a past-eternal universe. There is no escape, they have to face the problem of a cosmic beginning.”

- Dr. Alexander Vilenkin, Physicist



Drowning the Fish



Spontaneous creation from nothing...quantum vacuums...multi-verses...
These and other such propositions by naturalistic scientists are an example of “drowning the fish”. You can use all the water in the oceans in an attempt to drown the animal, but in the end, it will still be there affirming its existence and presence.

Why Deny the Possibility of God?

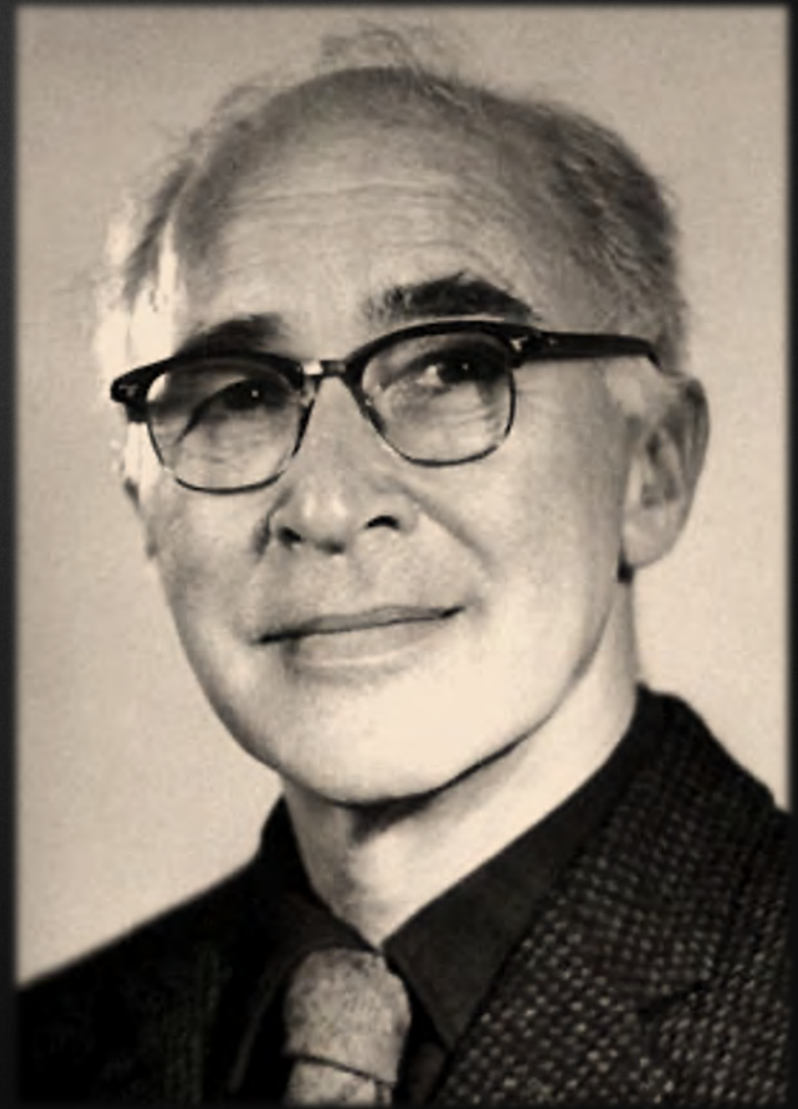
“Many people do not like the idea that time has a beginning, probably because it smacks of divine intervention.”
– Stephen Hawking



Why Deny the Possibility of God?

“There are only two possibilities as to how life arose; one is spontaneous generation arising to evolution, the other is a supernatural creative act of God, there is no third possibility. Spontaneous generation that life arose from non-living matter was scientifically disproved 120 years ago by Louis Pasteur and others. That leaves us with only one possible conclusion, that life arose as a creative act of God. I will not accept that philosophically because I do not want to believe in God, therefore I choose to believe in that which I know is scientifically impossible”

– Dr. George Wald
Professor Emeritus of Biology, Harvard
Nobel Prize winner in Biology



“At first the scientific community was very reluctant to accept the idea of a birth of the universe. Not only did the Big Bang model seem to give in to the Judeo-Christian idea of a beginning of the world, but it also seemed to have to call for an act of supernatural creation. . . .It took time, observational evidence, and careful verification of predictions made by the Big Bang model to convince the scientific community to accept the idea of a cosmic genesis. . . . The Big Bang is a very successful model . . . that imposed itself on a reluctant scientific community.”

- J. M. Wersinger

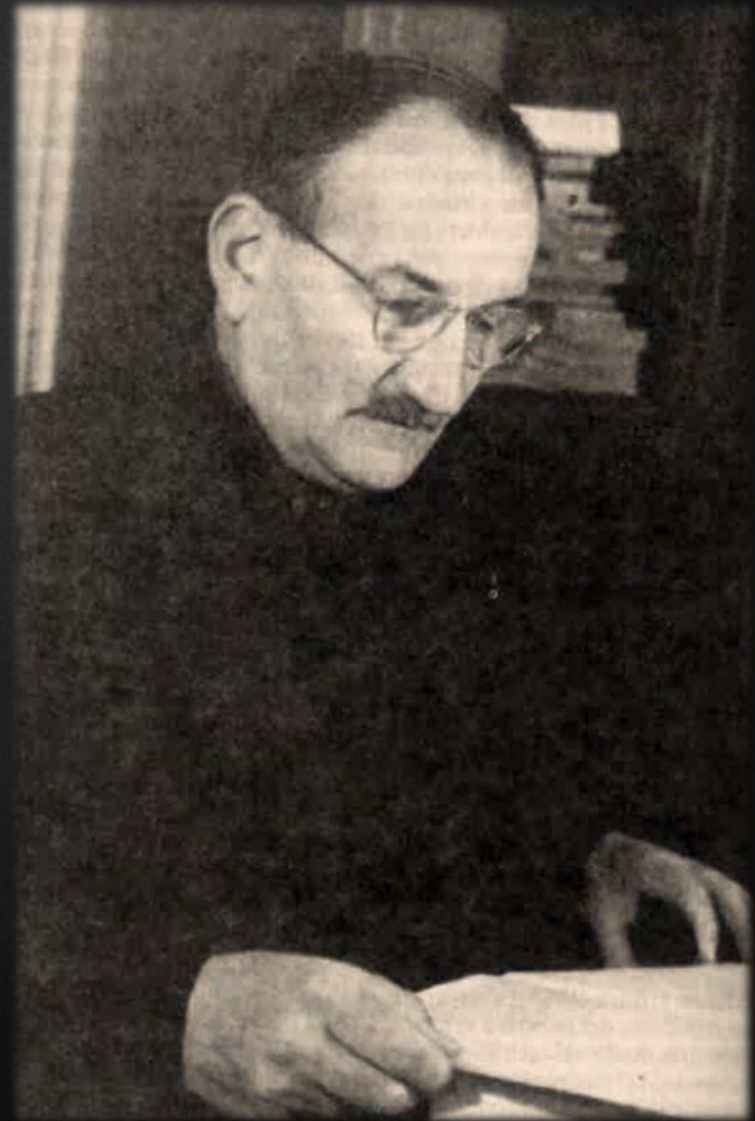


The Option of a Creator

Why God is the Best Explanation for Reality

“But why anything at all is, or exists, science knows not, precisely because it cannot even ask the question. To this supreme question, the only conceivable answer is that each and every particular existential energy, each and every particular existing thing, depends for its existence upon a pure Act of existence.”

- Etienne Gilson



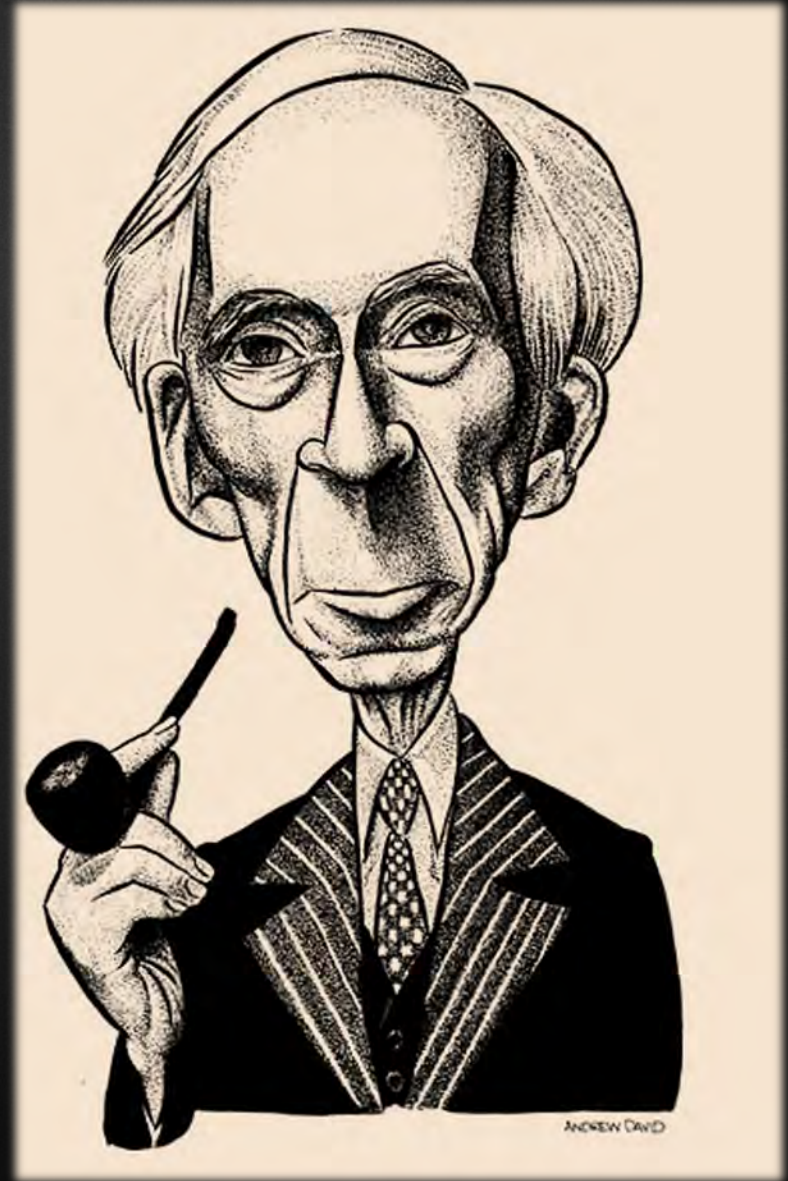
Revisiting the Four Possible Options for Reality

1. ~~Reality is an illusion~~
2. ~~Reality is self-created~~
3. ~~Reality is self-existent~~
4. Reality was created by something that is self-existent



“I may say that when I was a young man and was debating these questions very seriously in my mind, I for a long time accepted the argument of the First Cause, until one day, at the age of eighteen, I read John Stuart Mill's Autobiography, and I there found this sentence: "My father taught me that the question 'Who made me?' cannot be answered, since it immediately suggests the further question 'Who made god?'" That very simple sentence showed me, as I still think, the fallacy in the argument of the First Cause. If everything must have a cause, then God must have a cause.”

- Bertrand Russell



A Category Mistake



“What does the color blue taste like?”

“Where is the bachelor’s wife?”

Positing a self-existent first cause is philosophically sound; you don’t make the unmade.

Typical Skeptical Objection



“A Self-Existent, Eternal **God**?? Gimme a Break! Impossible!

The Christian Response

COMEBACK

“A Self-Existent, Eternal **Universe**?? Gimme a Break! Impossible!

Fact: You Must Go Back to A Self-Existent, Eternal Something



- If you deny a self-existent, necessary, and eternal Creator, you must automatically embrace a self-existent, necessary, and eternal universe (or a combination of the two, which is pantheism).
- Every drop of scientific data points to the conclusion that the universe had a beginning and is not eternal.
- Why is an eternal Creator preposterous and an eternal universe not? Perhaps because an eternal universe is an amoral entity who doesn't hold anyone accountable?

What Kind of First Cause Are We Talking About?

- The cause must be **supernatural** in nature (it created the natural).
- The cause must be **powerful** (incredibly).
- The cause must be **eternal** (self-existent; no infinite regress of causes).
- The cause must be **omnipresent** (it created space and is not limited by it).
- The cause must be **timeless** and **changeless** (it created time).
- The cause must be **immaterial** (because it transcends space/physical).
- The cause must be **personal** (defined as “having intent”).
- The cause must be **necessary** (as everything else depends on it).
- The cause must be **infinite** and **singular** as you cannot have two infinities.
- The cause must be **diverse** yet have **unity**.
- The cause must be **intelligent** (supremely).
- The cause must be **purposeful** (it deliberately created everything).
- The cause must be **moral** (no moral law can be had without a giver).
- The cause must be **caring** (or no moral laws would have been given).

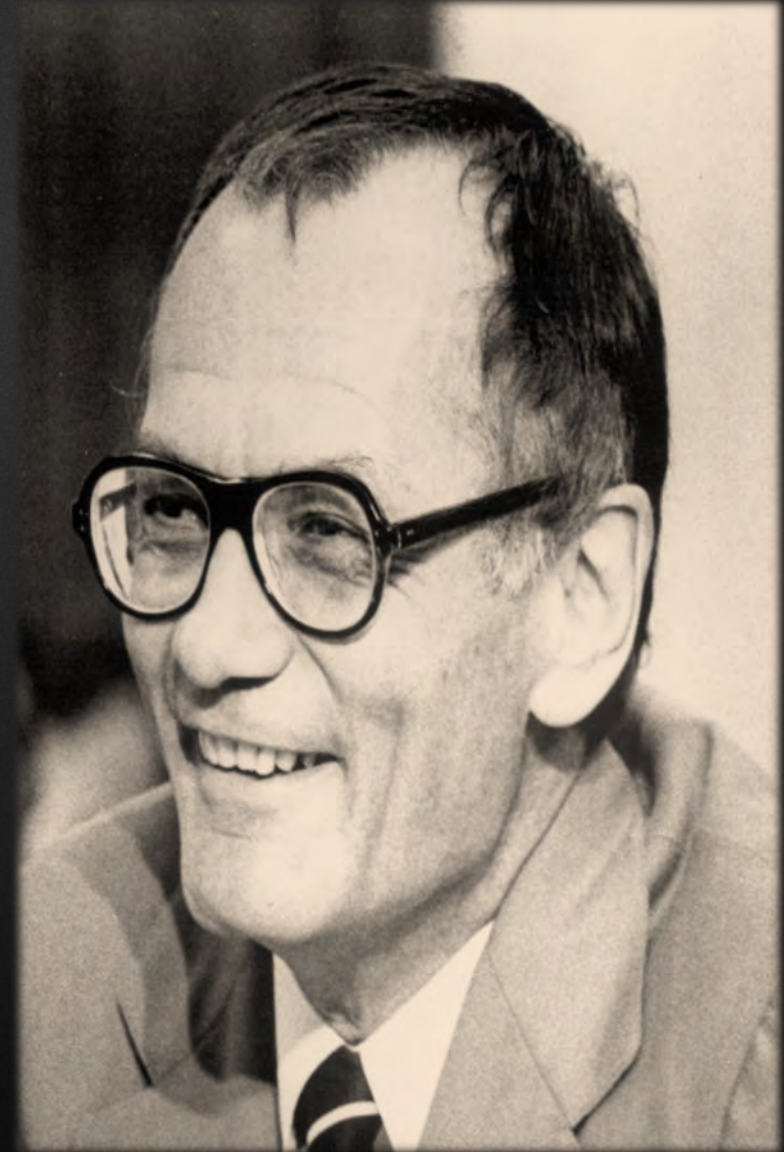
The Bible Describes Just Such a Cause

- God is supernatural (Genesis 1:1)
- Powerful (Jeremiah 32:17)
- Eternal (Psalm 90:2)
- Omnipresent (Psalm 139:7)
- Timeless/changeless (Malachi 3:6)
- Immaterial (John 5:24)
- Personal (Genesis 3:9)
- Necessary (Colossians 1:17)
- Infinite/singular (Jeremiah 23:24, Deut. 6:4)
- Diverse yet with unity (Matthew 28:19)
- Intelligent (Psalm 147:4-5)
- Purposeful (Jeremiah 29:11)
- Moral (Daniel 9:14)
- Caring (1 Peter 5:6-7)



“Astronomers now find they have painted themselves into a corner because they have proven, by their own methods, that the world began abruptly in an act of creation to which you can trace the seeds of every star, every planet, every living thing in this cosmos and on the earth. And they have found that all this happened as a product of forces they cannot hope to discover. . . . That there are what I or anyone would call **supernatural forces at work** is now, I think, a scientifically proven fact.”

- **Robert Jastrow, NASA Scientist**



Conclusions

Final Thoughts

Of the Four Options for Reality, God is the Best Explanation

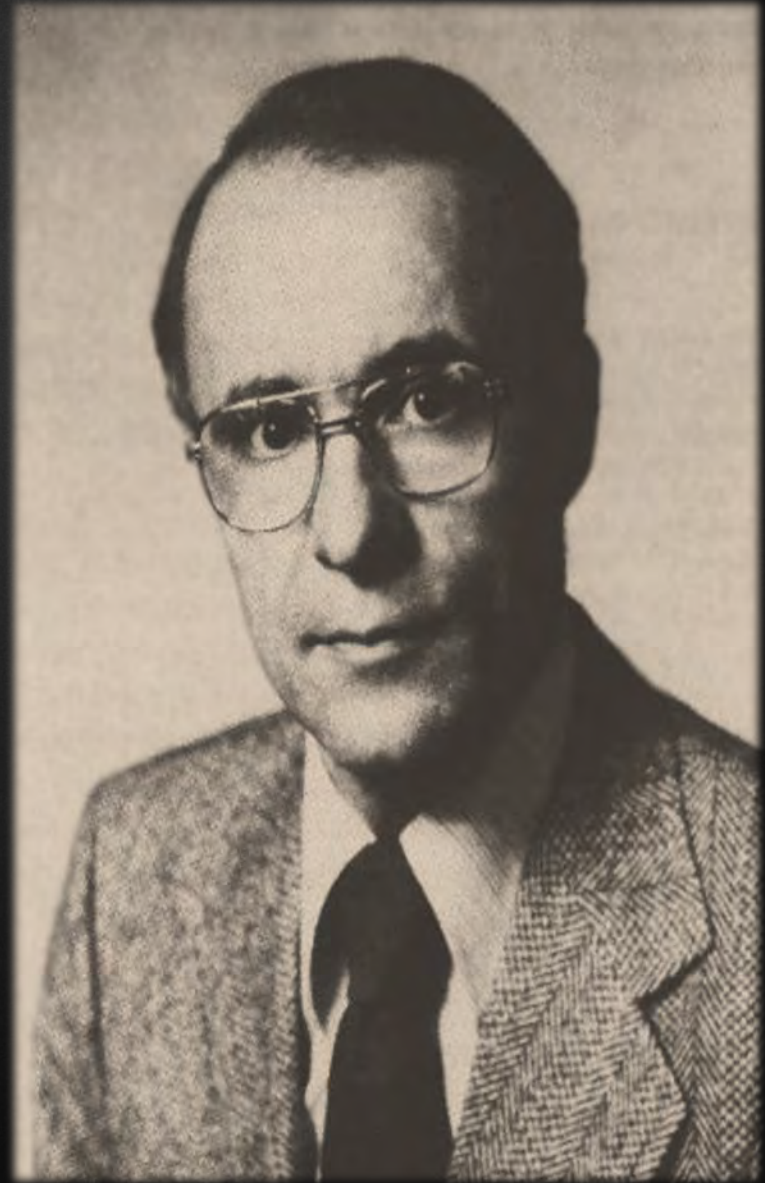
*Now, That's
a Good
Question!*

Which is more reasonable to believe:

- (1) That an impersonal, non-conscious, meaningless, purposeless, and amoral universe that had its own beginning accidentally created personal, conscious, moral beings who are obsessed with meaning and purpose, or
- (2) That a personal, conscious, purposeful, intelligent, moral, eternal God created beings in His likeness and established the universe and its laws to govern their existence?

“The best data we have [concerning the origin of the universe] 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.”

- Arno Penzias, Nobel Astrophysicist



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