

## **Outline    “Blast From The Past: God and the Big Bang”    January 28, 2007**

*“In the beginning when God created the heavens and the earth” Genesis 1:1-19*

### **Introduction**

- *But do not forget this one thing, dear friends: With the Lord a day is like a thousand years, and a thousand years are like a day. 2 Peter 3:8*
- *“Science without religion is lame, religion without science is blind.” Albert Einstein*

### **I. The Origin of the Universe: The Big Bang**

Science’s prevailing theory of the origin of the universe and Genesis 1

- The Lord sits above the circle of the earth. He stretches out the heavens like a canopy, and spreads them out like a tent to live in. Isaiah 40:22
- *“There were two ways of arriving at the truth. I decided to follow them both.”  
Georges Lemaitre*

### **II. The Vastness of the Universe**

How large is our universe? How small are we in it? Science and religion respond.

- *“When I look at the heavens, the work of your fingers, the moon the stars whew you have made; what are human beings that you are mindful of them, mortals that you care for them?” Psalm 8:3,4*

### **III. The Future of the Universe**

Eschatology – the physicist’s answer, the Bible’s answer.

*“I saw a new heaven and a new earth; for the first heaven and first earth had passed away.” Rev. 21*

### **IV. The Make-up of, and Laws that Govern, the Universe (at the Quantum Level)**

- A realm of knowledge where language fails – Quantum and God
- By faith we understand that the universe was formed at God’s command, so that what is seen was not made out of what was visible. Hebrews 11:3

**Conclusion:** God and the Grand Unifying Theory

*“In him we live and move and have our being.” Acts 17:28*

## Study Guide “Blast From The Past: God and the Big Bang” January 28, 2007

**Monday** – As you begin your study guide readings, open with a word of prayer, inviting God to speak to you as you reflect upon the scriptures in the light of yesterday’s sermon. The last two weeks we’ve learned that God’s intention in the Bible was to speak of theology, morality and spirituality, not to attempt to explain science. As you read *Genesis 1:1-19*, what does this passage teach us about God, God’s role in creation, and the creation itself? What implications might this passage have for how we are to live in relationship to God and in relationship to the creation? In what way does this passage line up with modern scientific theory about the origin of the universe? How is it inconsistent with what we know from science? How do you reconcile the two?

**Tuesday** – How vast is the universe? Remember that if the universe were the size of planet earth, our solar system would be the size of a single bacterium. What do you think God is up to throughout the rest of the universe? Christian theology teaches that God holds the entire universe together – and that God is present in the farthest reaches of the universe. Do you think there could be life on other planets? Though life is so rare, it seems, throughout the universe, what relationship would God have to life on other planets? How would God’s salvation story have been told? What questions does this raise? With regard to the sheer size of our universe, we can feel pretty small – read *Psalms 8* where the writer felt this smallness, but then offers a biblical understanding of our place as humans in God’s universe. How does this passage speak to you? What should our response be to the vastness and the majesty of space?

**Wednesday** – Both physics and the Bible offers us a picture of the future of the universe. What is the physicist’s picture of the future of planet earth? Of the universe? The Bible offers us a contrasting picture of the future of the world – in some ways similar to what the physicist teaches, and yet a much closer horizon and filled with a great deal more hope. Read *Revelation 21 – 22:6*. Where do you see connecting points between the Bible’s picture of the future and the physicist’s picture? How are they different?

**Thursday** – Scientists find that language is inadequate, as is our mental capabilities, for naturally making sense of how things work in the realm of sub-atomic particles. Things that are illogical and seemingly incompatible are logical and compatible in that realm. How does this relate to our understanding of the nature of God and our attempts to understand God? Scientists tell us that matter is energy and that it is possible for that energy to be changed into a different form – we suggested that this might be a helpful way of looking at the soul, and the new body Paul speaks of that we receive at death. How might these two ideas be interrelated? Read *I Corinthians 15:35-58*. What does this say about what happens to us when we die? Physics does not prove any of these ideas about the nature of God nor about the afterlife, but it does demonstrate that there is a realm of our universe that our scientists are uncovering that works in much the same way that theologians have said theology, God and heaven work.

**Friday** – Read the Apostle Paul’s sermon to the Greek philosophers in Athens in *Acts 17:16-34*. What does Paul teach us about God? About the universe? What does he mean when he quotes Epimenides saying, “In Him we live and move and have our being?” Why would some theologians consider God to be the “Grand Unifying Theory” physicists long for? What role does God play in the Big Bang? In writing the laws of the universe? In continuing to oversee creation? In guiding the cosmos? In holding together the entire universe? In sustaining and guiding us as human beings? Take the time to thank God for creating a universe that is able to support your existence. Scientists note that the odds of such a universe existing are astronomically small – the factors that had to come together to support human life on this planet are almost unfathomable – naturalistic science attributes it to luck, theology to God.