



# DOES GOD EXIST? 4 NEW ARGUMENTS

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You know, for 27 years, I was an atheist. I thought, anyone who believed in a God or Gods was, well, stupid – or uneducated – naive, gullible, or just into the gig for money, sex, and power. I mean, after all, everyone knows that religion is just a psychological crutch for intellectual weaklings, right? So, what changed my mind?

Well look, I tell the whole story in my book *Shattered*, but for our purposes here on Prager University, I was simply challenged by my Christian teammates on the Cincinnati Reds to read some religious books, critique them, and then share with the guys where the authors were wrong, and why atheism is the only real and true outlook for anyone not deceived by fantasy, fiction, or mythology. I mean, for someone who wants to base their beliefs and values upon evidence and argument, not emotion and tradition.

Now look, simply put, I set out to disprove theism, which I didn't think would take very long, but I ran into some difficulties along the way. Difficulties like: Aristotle, Augustine, Aquinas. I mean, in simple terms, I was confronted with the awareness that there are really four big bangs that have to be accounted for, not just one. I had never really even considered that before.

We're all familiar with the first big bang, right? It's usually the answer given to the question: "Why is there something rather than nothing?" It's the idea that there was nothing, it popped, and – boom! – there's something! I mean, that time, matter and space all came into existence in some great cosmological flash about 16 billion years ago. There was no gradual development, no transitional forms, just a binary flip – a metaphysical, now you don't see it, and now you do. Fine, I want to follow the evidence wherever it leads.

However, astrophysicists tell us that this first big bang yielded only a handful of fundamental elements, and that it would take billions and billions of years for the nuclear furnaces of trillions of stars to yield the 118 elements in the periodic table.

But the first theoretical cosmological big bang, well, it only yields matter and energy. It doesn't even begin to address the origin of life. So, how do you get life from non-life?

How did abiogenesis occur? I mean, the notion that something can come from nothing. Where's the evidence?

Well, you're going to need another something-from-nothing leap of faith, some kind of biological, second big bang. For all the mind-blowing advancements we've made in physics, biology, and chemistry in just the past 100 years, we're still no closer to making it happen. We

don't have a clue. The closer we look, the wider the chasm.

I mean, sure, we've learned a lot about how to manipulate life forms, how to add and subtract DNA material, even map the human genome, but we have no idea how to literally create life from dead stuff. Now look, at this point we still only have physics, chemistry, and some basic biology – or matter, energy, and simple life, if you will.

But we still don't have a way to account for the great diversity of life forms, I mean, the huge differences between bacteria, plants and animals. Nor do we have a way to account for the differences between man and animal. We still don't have an anthropology at this point.

So, we're going to need a kind of anthropological third big bang to account for all this, which of course is what Darwin was after in his "Descent of Man" thesis. Now look, Darwin answered a lot of questions, but he could never answer the core question: How did evolution begin?

But hey, we're still not done describing the world that is all around us. A final big bang is going to be required to explain how a mechanistic animal brain can become a self-reflective human mind. Even the lowest life forms have brains and central nervous systems. I mean, how does something like that become the mind of a Michelangelo, a Shakespeare, a Beethoven? Come on, animals don't do art, and they don't appreciate beauty.

But the problem is even more basic than that. How do you account for free will and introspection, let alone man's pressing existential drive to ask, "why?" Well we're going to need some kind of psychological 4th big bang to account for man's moral and aesthetic sense – his search for meaning, significance, and purpose, and of course his appreciation for the true, the good, and the beautiful. And again, you must understand, these problems require bangs – I mean, sudden binary pops into existence, since there's no evidence for any gradual development in any of these.

So, I, like you, have a choice. It's either faith in these four big bangs of "somethings from nothings" to account for what we see all around us, or faith in some kind of creator God behind it all. So, next time someone asks you "Hey, what about the big bang?" make sure you ask them: "Which one? The cosmological, biological, anthropological, or psychological?"

I'm Frank Pastore for Prager University.