

Session 3: Atheism or Theism: Which Is Reasonable? (Part 1)

(1). Main Text:

13 Now when Jesus heard this, he withdrew from there in a boat to a desolate place by himself. But when the crowds heard it, they followed him on foot from the towns. **14** When he went ashore he saw a great crowd, and he had compassion on them and healed their sick. **15** Now when it was evening, the disciples came to him and said, “This is a desolate place, and the day is now over; send the crowds away to go into the villages and buy food for themselves.” **16** But Jesus said, “They need not go away; you give them something to eat.” **17** They said to him, “We have only five loaves here and two fish.” **18** And he said, “Bring them here to me.” **19** Then he ordered the crowds to sit down on the grass, and taking the five loaves and the two fish, he looked up to heaven and said a blessing. Then he broke the loaves and gave them to the disciples, and the disciples gave them to the crowds. **20** And they all ate and were satisfied. And they took up twelve baskets full of the broken pieces left over. **21** And those who ate were about five thousand men, besides women and children. (Matt 14:13-21; ESV)

(2). The resurrection of God:

On the 8th of April in 1966, Time Magazine printed one of it’s most famous articles. Featured in bright red lettering over a stark black back-drop, the cover imposingly read:

_____.

Time itself later published a sequel to that very issue in 1969 entitled:

_____.

(3). Our Miraculous Universe:

In late 2014, the Wall Street Journal reported on a notably different trend. The article, written by Eric Mataxas, carried the surprising headline: “Science Increasingly Makes the Case for God.”

“The beginning of the universe seems to present insuperable difficulties unless we agree to look on it as frankly supernatural.” (Sir Arthur Eddington)

““God...is the [only] explanation for the miracle of existence, of why there is something instead of nothing.” (Allan Sandage)

(4). What is a Miracle?

“A surprising...event that is not explicable by _____ or scientific laws...”
(Oxford Dictionary)

The Feeding of the Five Thousand is a classic example of _____.

Today, an entire guild of skeptical Bible scholars deny this story. Apparently, as Newsweek reports, modern “Bible teachers” agree with atheists.

The denial of the miracle of the feeding of the 5,000 actually debunks _____.

(5). The Slow Decay:

All of modern science proves the universe had a _____.

The gradual aging of our universe is best explained by the science of thermodynamics.

1st Law: Matter cannot be created or destroyed.

2nd Law: The entropy of an isolated system always increases with time.

Entropy: “A process of degradation or running down or a trend to disorder.” (Miriam-Webster)

“The world is passing away along with its desires...” (1 John 2:16; ESV)

The longer our solar system spins, the more it depletes it's usable _____.

“Our own sun will become a cold dead remnant floating...in an increasingly isolated Milky Way.” (Beatrice Tinsley,)

Due to the 1st and 2nd laws of thermodynamics, the universe cannot back-fill itself with new material as it ages. In other words, the universe cannot be replenished. Neither can it somehow defy the inevitability of it's own death. The weakening case for atheism is thus beyond the help of science. The universe *cannot* be _____.

(6). The Grand Dilemma:

When seen alongside Jesus' meal with the five thousand, the 2nd law calls into being an irrepressible set of questions. How can the atheist account for the miracle of existence?

If the atheist trusts that the creation of matter was accomplished by purely natural means, then why does he say Jesus' feeding of the five thousand_____?

On the other hand, if he claims the story of the feeding of the five thousand is not explainable naturally, then why does he believe that the creation of matter and the universe_____?

If Jesus can't create bread from nothing by some natural means, then surely the "Big Bang" could not have created_____from nothing by purely natural means.

If the skeptic scholar denies the feeding of the five thousand because only the supernatural can account for it, then he is_____in the case of the creation of matter and energy that only the supernatural can account for it.

Hence, to deny this Bible story is to admit that the universe was_____created.

On the other hand, to say that the universe came about naturally is to come near to affirming_____.

"As to the cause of the universe, in context of expansion, that is left for the reader to insert, but our picture is incomplete without God." (E. Arthur Milne)

(7). Session Summary:

The above argument from the science of thermodynamics proves that the universe cannot_____.

The universe has not existed forever and therefore requires a supernatural cause to bring it into existence.

But does the Big Bang give account for that cause? This discussion is taken up in the forthcoming session.