

## *Life & Light*

John 1:1-4    January 3, 2010

### Imagine

There is no time.

No – not that you don't have time to get everything done.

That's not hard to imagine.

No – I mean, image time itself does not exist.

Oh – and there is no space.

There certainly is no thing in timespace, but even more profoundly, there is no space; no time.

You can't even say the "time before time" because there is -- no time.

Can you get your head around that – no thing, no time – no space?

POW

Within milliseconds timespace expands at the speed of light,

with every point in space as the center of the universe as everything moves away from everything else in four dimensions as our universe comes into being.

Mind you, the universe isn't expanding into space, because moments before there was no space;

rather it is spacetime itself that is expanding – and continues to do so.

About 14 billion years ago, that is what possibly happened and we call it – the Big Bang.

I say possibly because physicists and cosmologist aren't really sure.

What they are pretty sure about is that the evolution of the universe began well over 13 billion years ago, but beyond that it gets a little sketchy.

Problems with the Big Bang theory started right away when they realized that the universe had expanded and “flattened” more than it should have, (and don't ask me to explain that) so they came up with a creative band-aid called “inflation” where for the initial moments gravity was actually pushing things apart, rather than pulling them together, and this solved the problem.

But as Cambridge physicist Brian Clegg states, there was

“no good explanation for why this should have happened, but if it happened, it would explain why things are so different from expectation.”

[Clegg, 136]

Brian Clegg, in his book, *Before the Big Bang*, writes:

Taken all together, the problems with the Big Bang plus inflation theory are not tiny negligible gaps between observation and theory; they are huge chasms you could drive a cosmological coach and horse through.”

He goes on to say,

“Most cosmologists speak as if these problems have been solved, but the solutions are really huge fudge factors...

Not only has inflation been added, it has also been necessary to squeeze in other unexpected components such as dark matter and dark energy to make the current model of the universe fit the observed data.”

Some would argue that the fixes to the model introduced to make it fit reality are so extreme that they imply we need to start again from scratch. [159]

And so, much of the science community has started over and many are the fancies of the cosmological speculations.

It may be that the universes cycles or repeats, meaning that before the Big Bang there was another universe and there will be more after this one.

Or, there is string theory or M theory that encompasses string theory where there are 11 dimensions.

**These theories include the possibility that our universe resides in a black hole and is but one of an indefinite number of universes that reside in an even larger universe.**

**It also includes the possibility that there are an indefinite number of universes existing eternally, called branes, short for membranes, and that these branes are usually dead, so to speak, but every 4 trillion years or so leaking gravity causes them to bump into each other in the 10th dimension and the consequent energy from the bump ignites the branes to life that lasts of a few trillion years before all of its energy has been expended.**

It all leads to the possibility of parallel universes and multi-verses and wormholes and the possibility that we are all simulated and not-real, a la the movie *The Matrix*, or that there really are no dimensions and what we call space/time is but a human mental convention.

Given all that, the theological statement we find at the beginning of the Gospel of John is really refreshing.

*In the beginning was the Word, aka., the logos, the ordering principle, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.*

*It was in the beginning with God.*

*All things came into being through it, and without it not one thing came into being.*

*What has come into being in it was life, and the life was the light of all people.*

This is not a scientific statement, but a rather a theological statement.

It is a statement that professes that what gives us life, and meaning and purpose and direction now is the same as that which is in the very origins of all that is.

The notion that there is an eternal order, logos, or the Word, as it is translated into English in John's gospel, that is present in the beginning, is consistent with some strains of M theory.

We would find M theory also consistent with the description in Genesis where we see an eternal something giving order to an eternal formless void.

And interestingly, in most of the cosmological theories there is agreement with the Genesis account that even before the stars and planets are formed, there is an explosion of energy and light.

But we must remember that John 1 and Genesis 1 are not scientific cosmological theories, but rather theological statements about faith in a creating, value producing, meaning inducing God.

So, if your brain is spinning now, like mine, I will tell you that after reading Clegg's book -

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I am just happy to be here.

Can we even begin to comprehend how big, how awesome, how far beyond our comprehension God must be? NO

Can we even begin to understand how special each of us is – how incredibly blessed we are just to be here? NO

It has taken 14 billion years for the universe to evolve to provide just the right conditions for you and I to be here right now.

And, the Gospel of John speaks of two of the most important emanations; light and life.

Whatever happened 14 billion years ago the first gift was energy and its expression in the form of light. And then it took some 14 billion years for the development of life to emerge from that energy.

But the gospel speaks with a double entendre; it references both the notion that the Christ, logos, Word is responsible for the very being of life and light; and on the other hand, John is speaking metaphorically, that it is the Christ that gives us life and light today in the form of meaning, purpose, value, all of which are derived from our enlightened relationship with God that comes through Christ Jesus revelation of God.

So today is Epiphany Sunday.

Today is the Sunday when the church recalls the arrival of the Magi, practitioners of a non-Jewish religion, the astronomers and cosmologist of

their day, who came from a land far away, in order to give homage to Jesus.  
And how did they find Jesus?  
They followed a star, a light in the sky that brought them to where?  
Who can tell me where that star brought them to?

It didn't take them to our manger scene – the star guided them to Joseph and Mary's house.

You see in Luke's gospel Joseph and Mary come from Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to the city of David called Bethlehem and because they are travelling they need a place to stay – the inn – where we find the manger.

But in Matthew's gospel the magi followed the star and on entering the house, they saw the child with Mary his mother.  
In Matthew they don't travel to Bethlehem, they actually live in Bethlehem.

But this digresses from my point.

**In Matthew, the Magi follow the light, but in John's gospel, Jesus is the light.**

For John, Jesus, the incarnation of the Word, is the light that brings forth creation and the light that reveals to us and enlightens us as to the meaning of creation.

And the meaning of creation is the one thing that all the scientific theory cannot provide us.

Whatever happened billions of years ago – why did it happen?

Love.

As John's gospel tells us, Jesus reveals to us that it is all about the fulfillment of God's love.

And we, God help us, are the highest known expression of that love.

The final cause, the ultimate aim, the end of the arc of evolution is the fulfillment of God's love, and we, God help us, are leading the charge.

## So where are we headed?

Well hopefully we will get it right someday, before we destroy ourselves.

And if we do, we may live and continue to evolve for millions of more years and when our sun burns out find a way to another galaxy.

And then perhaps we may live on and evolve for trillions of years and find a way to another universe when ours dies out.

Think how far we have come in just a few short million years.

Just think how far we have come in the last 100 years – the last 50 years.

Where might we be in a trillion years?

But it will only happen if today we follow the light and learn to love.

Of course that is all for our very, very, very great grandchildren.

As for us, we will be in God's loving arms, long before then.

To which we all should say...

AMEN.