

WHERE DOES THE UNIVERSE END ?

by Chaplain on Signal Mountain

Where Does the Universe End??

Astronomers tell us, the Universe is expanding - pushing outward.

Physicists tell us, the Universe may have been caused by an explosion - the Big Bang.

Nuclear scientists tell us, they may have found the source of all - the "god-particle."

Sacred Scriptures tell us, the world was formless, and God made the firmament - heaven.

Theologians tell us, God is the Ultimate Being - Creator of "everything."

Statements such as these suggest a conflict between science and faith.

This tension is nothing new. For sure, they offer material for inquisitive minds:

- a) astronomers could determine the Universe's expansion by measuring changes in the distances between known celestial bodies;
- b) an explosion of some sort could explain the Universe's outward movement;
- c) an atom-smasher could bust apart an atom into tiny, tiny pieces;
- d) a belief in one Ultimate Being as the Creator of all things could come from ancient writings of an ancient people - among many others who believed everything was created and determined by any number of cosmic gods.

For the sake of conversation, consider these thoughts.

1. The scientific stuff. Accept that the Universe is expanding, with all its gases, masses, voids, visible and invisible matter, radiation and gravitation energies, protons, electrons, neutrons, neutrinos, quarks, "god-particles," and whatever. Also, accept the Big Bang theory and existence of a god-particle as the source of creation.
2. The faith beliefs. Accept that an Ultimate Being created all the above, and formed all into what is visible and known today. Also, accept that the Ultimate Being controls all the effects upon the living species. And for some, consider the potential of Intelligent Design and an Intelligent Designer.

Since the ultimate source of creation is in contention, consider this scenario?

Let us say, the god-particle and the Ultimate Being (call it God) unite, they are now a Unit. Also, the firmament is the Universe. God and the god-particle Unit unleash the Big Bang, sending its particles outward, racing throughout the firmament-Universe. Crashing into

each other, these particles take on various forms. Nuclear fusion then produces complicated molecules with various atomic structures.

Result: God and the god-particle Unit has created a new world,
which is forming and pushing outward from its nondescript locus.

Moving on with this scenario. The firmament is equal to the Universe. The creator Unit of the firmament-Universe is now identified as "God the god-particle." This Unit causes the Big Bang, pushing the firmament-Universe outward. If the Big Bang is expanding the firmament-Universe, then in what space is this expansion taking place? Is the expanding firmament-Universe like a vessel having an outer shell? Could this Universe-vessel resemble a balloon floating in some other firmament-universe? As an example, we play with balloons filled with water. The water is the expansion of particles, the balloon is its vessel. The water filled balloon is now a universe-vessel floating in a space we call atmosphere. In what space is both our water balloon and our atmosphere floating? Do these now represent a new universe-vessel which is floating in a greater universe-vessel? Should our water balloon universe-vessel burst, the water particle expansion empties into the succeeding universe-vessel and the expansion continues on. If this example works, then it suggests there are greater and greater concentric universe-vessels, each holding a balloon-like firmament-universe. Even the greatest of concentric universe-vessels, the overarching firmament-universe, must be contained in something? Where is the outer limit of these universe-vessels? This is like a photograph of a photograph of a photograph. Inward and inward goes the image. The same concept applies to going outward.

There is a second level to this: where was God the god-particle, BEFORE? God the god-particle had to be somewhere before the Big Bang occurred. Which universe-vessel contained God the god-particle? If God the god-particle was in the innermost universe-vessel, this might explain the initial expansion that astronomers observe. Still, how did it get there? How did it form? If God the god-particle was outside and beyond the outer most universe-vessel, could God the god-particle have been exterior to all of the firmament-universes, distant from us. Where was it waiting? Why did it begin creating?

This essay suggests a summary of thoughts for contemplation.

First, there must be an extreme end to the Universe, somewhere.

Second, there must have been a form of atomic action creating our physical Universe.

Third, our Universe cannot be the only one. We must be a part of something greater.

Fourth, it is possible that our own unique created Universe is only the one we know of and can see. Consider that there may be more created universes made by more big bangs caused by more than one God the god-particle. Some will call this heresy, blasphemy.

Fifth, all this opens the door for a possible ultimate-ultimate God the god-particle which oversees many penultimate God the god-particles. This establishes one ultimate-ultimate never-ending source of everything else. Scriptural historic exegesis initiates this thought, as in, El, Elohim, El Shaddai. Even so, where is its home? It must be somewhere.

Maybe those simply holding faith to One Ultimate Being causing all, are the most settled.

Sixth, there must be some way we, the Universe, and God the god-particle are connected.

Here is a belief system proposal,

offering how the Universe, the Ultimate Being, the god-particle, and we are all connected.

First, credence is given to both the scientific and the faith scenarios,

Second, contemplate the total enormity and unknown of, Where Does the Universe End?

Third, place God the god-particle and universe-vessels in the firmament-Universe.

Fourth, insert pantheism and panentheism:

- we concurrently exist as part of and within what is thought of as God. and
- that which is thought of as God exists within and is part of each of us.

We exist within both theologies. Interchange the word God with either Ultimate Being, god-particle, or Universe and the dialectic structure remains the same.

Alfred North Whitehead called this connection a Flux. It is an inward and outward Process of Becoming, providing elemental energy both ways. Charles Hartshorne created a variation on this. He added a cosmic Ultimate Being to this secular Becoming.

Hartshorne turns Flux into an ever changing flow of energy between mortal and immortal.

Add Martin Buber: His "I and Thou" offers a dialectic between the mortal Us and God.

These are not twentieth-century-only thoughts. The ancient writings of Chinese Taoist

Lao Tzu said, "our self is lent to us by the universe." We are all within the universe.

The universe is within all of us: its elements, its molecules, its energies. Our bodies are mostly water. We are energized by the sun. We breath atmosphere - both good and bad.

We gain vital nourishment from the soil, We alter the natural habitat. That habitat alters us. (Examples: hurricanes, forest fires, earthquakes, solar radiation, ozone layers and more.) We look into “the heavens” and desire to travel there. We are in search of life on other planets. We search for our beginnings out in space well beyond our Earth. We seek to understand our place in the Universe. We are both part of and within the firmament-universe created by God the god-particle.

Where does the Universe End? Maybe, someday, we will find out.

Is there an Ultimate Being? Is there a god-particle? Possibly, one or both.

Whether the ultimate source is God or a god-particle, we humans are within both.

Each of these sources are within us. We are also within the Universe and it is within us.

We have a responsibility to and for all of this.

Should the reader follow these thoughts, they might consider that we humans may actually be closer than we think to the never-ending source of “creation” in our Universe. Here on Earth, unless we destroy ourselves, destroy our environment, our atmosphere, our earthly elements, our fellow humans and other species, we may be able to continue to create that which God of faith, and the god-particle of science gave to us

“In the Beginning” with “The Big Bang.”

Best Wishes and Thoughts for All.

Chaplain on Signal Mountain.

Summer 2012