

## A REACTION TO BIG BANG EUPHORIA

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In 1992, newspapers plastered across their front pages new findings about the Big Bang theory. The Associated Press quoted physicist Joel Primack as saying that the new scientific data represent “one of the major discoveries of the century.” The reports often were couched in highly religious terms, suggesting that scientists have found the “Holy Grail of cosmology.” What is all this talk about, and what is its significance to the biblical record of creation?

### BACKGROUND

The Big Bang theory rests on three basic assumptions: (1) that from some sort of original “cosmic egg,” itself smaller than a single proton, hydrogen and helium atoms were created and ultimately (through a process called “nucleosynthesis”) gave rise to 99% of the visible matter in the Universe; (2) that the heat generated by this process has cooled to only a few degrees above absolute zero; and (3) that the Universe is expanding away from a central point. I discussed each of these points in a previous article (Major, 1991). But how is the current controversy related to these assumptions, and what ramifications do these new findings have on biblical creation?

Although the extremely high temperatures thought to be associated with the Big Bang cannot be measured directly, evolutionary cosmologists felt that one day it might be possible to find a remnant of these temperatures in what they termed “background” radiation—the “afterglow” of the Big Bang. In 1965, two scientists from Bell Laboratories, Arno Penzias and Robert Wilson, pointed an improvised radio telescope into space and found a uniform background radiation of three degrees above absolute zero ( $3^{\circ}$  Kelvin). Cosmologists took this as evidence for the Big Bang, and Drs. Penzias and Wilson subsequently were awarded a Nobel Prize for their discovery. In 1989, NASA launched its Cosmic Background Explorer satellite (COBE), and it began its survey of deep space. It, too, found a 3-K temperature (or, more correctly,  $2.735 \pm 0.06$  K, measured to an accuracy of one in 10,000).

There were still serious problems with the Big Bang theory, however. For example, in any Big Bang scenario—according to evolutionists’ assumptions about initial

conditions—the Universe can contain no more than 10% protons, neutrons, and other ordinary matter such as is found in stars, planets, etc. What makes up the rest of the matter—90-99% of the Universe—still is a mystery. Cosmologists do not know what it is, and have not found direct evidence of its existence. One suggestion is that it consists of “cold dark matter”—“cold” because it cannot interact with other matter (except gravitationally), and “dark” because it cannot be seen. Evolutionists desperately need this matter—both known and unknown—to allow for expansion and galaxy formation. If this extra matter did not exist, then the ordinary matter of the Universe would have scattered into the empty reaches of space without ever coming together to form galaxies.

The problem is, the Universe is “lumpy.” There are clusters of galaxies, for example, which stretch 550 million light-years across the sky. The cold dark matter theory cannot account for this, and circumventing this problem is what the current controversy is all about. Big Bang supporters now are suggesting that the “cosmic egg” had small defects—minor variations that could grow into major variations. The existence of these “minor variations” should have had some effect on the background radiation. However, until now, the evidence of any serious fluctuations in the background radiation has been conspicuously absent, leaving the Big Bang concept riddled with problems for which seemingly there were no solutions.

When NASA’s COBE satellite reported its first results, those results supported previous findings of a uniform background radiation. A second survey was carried out to an accuracy of not one in 10,000, but one in 100,000. Media reports are all about the results of this survey, which evolutionists say documents the existence of minor variations in the background temperature of the known Universe.

### COMMENTS

These variations are presumed to represent early defects that could explain how the Universe got to be so “lumpy.” However, most people likely are unaware of the infinitesimal nature of the variations being reported. In reality, the “variations” differ from the approximate 3-K background by barely **thirty-millionths** of a Kel-

vin. Some scientists doubt that these are large enough to account for the large-scale structure of the Universe (see Flam, 1992). So, while scientists were relieved to find variations, they have been forced to admit that the results are not exactly what they need to “fix” the theory.

Articles in science journals also have mentioned other concerns. For example, the measured temperature variations, according to the principal investigator, George Smoot, are “well below the level of instrumental noise.” In other words, the variations may turn out to be unimportant statistically because the instruments are not accurate enough to produce the published results. Al Kogut, who also worked on the initial research project, said: “You can’t point to any one point in the data and say ‘that’s signal and that’s noise’” (see Flam, 1992). These evolutionists believe, of course, that they are observing a real phenomenon, not just instrument noise. [It should be pointed out, however, that **the variations were not apparent from the raw data, but were “extracted” by manipulating COBE’s data.**]

### CONCLUSION

These recent findings certainly are not an unqualified success, and should be downgraded from “greatest discovery” to “interesting,” and from “proof” to “possible corroboration.” The British journal *Nature* commented: “The simple conclusion, that the data so far authenticated are consistent with the doctrine of the Big Bang, has been amplified in newspapers and broadcasts into proof that ‘we now know’ how the Universe began. This is cause for some alarm” (1992, p. 731).

Not so long ago, adherents of the Big Bang held to a smooth Universe, and pointed with pride to the uniform background radiation. Then they found large-scale structures, and revised their “predictions.” Now they have found infinitesimal variations, and are hailing them as the greatest discovery of the century. We must urge caution when a theory, claiming to be scientific, escapes falsification by continual modification with *ad hoc*, stopgap measures. Certainly there is no justification whatsoever for George Smoot to say, “If you’re religious, it’s like looking at God.” This statement spurred the media to seek comments from various religious quarters. According to the Associated Press, the “Rev. [sic] Mr. Burnham said many theologians will find having another confirmation of the big bang theory to be very compatible with the belief that God created the universe out of pre-existent chaos.” However, the idea that God just started the creation and left it to evolve on its own is not supported anywhere in the Bible. The evolutionists’ time scale is inconsistent with biblical chronology, and the creation record tells us that God created the heavenly objects on the fourth day. This order of creation differs markedly from the evolutionary account. Overall, this new discovery is not anywhere near as conclusive as its promoters claim. The Big Bang theory still is rife with problems.

### REFERENCES

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Originally Published In  
*Reason & Revelation*  
June 1992, 7[6]:21-22

### ARTICLE REPRINT

Distributed by  
Apologetics Press, Inc.  
230 Landmark Drive  
Montgomery, AL 36117-2752  
(334) 272-8558